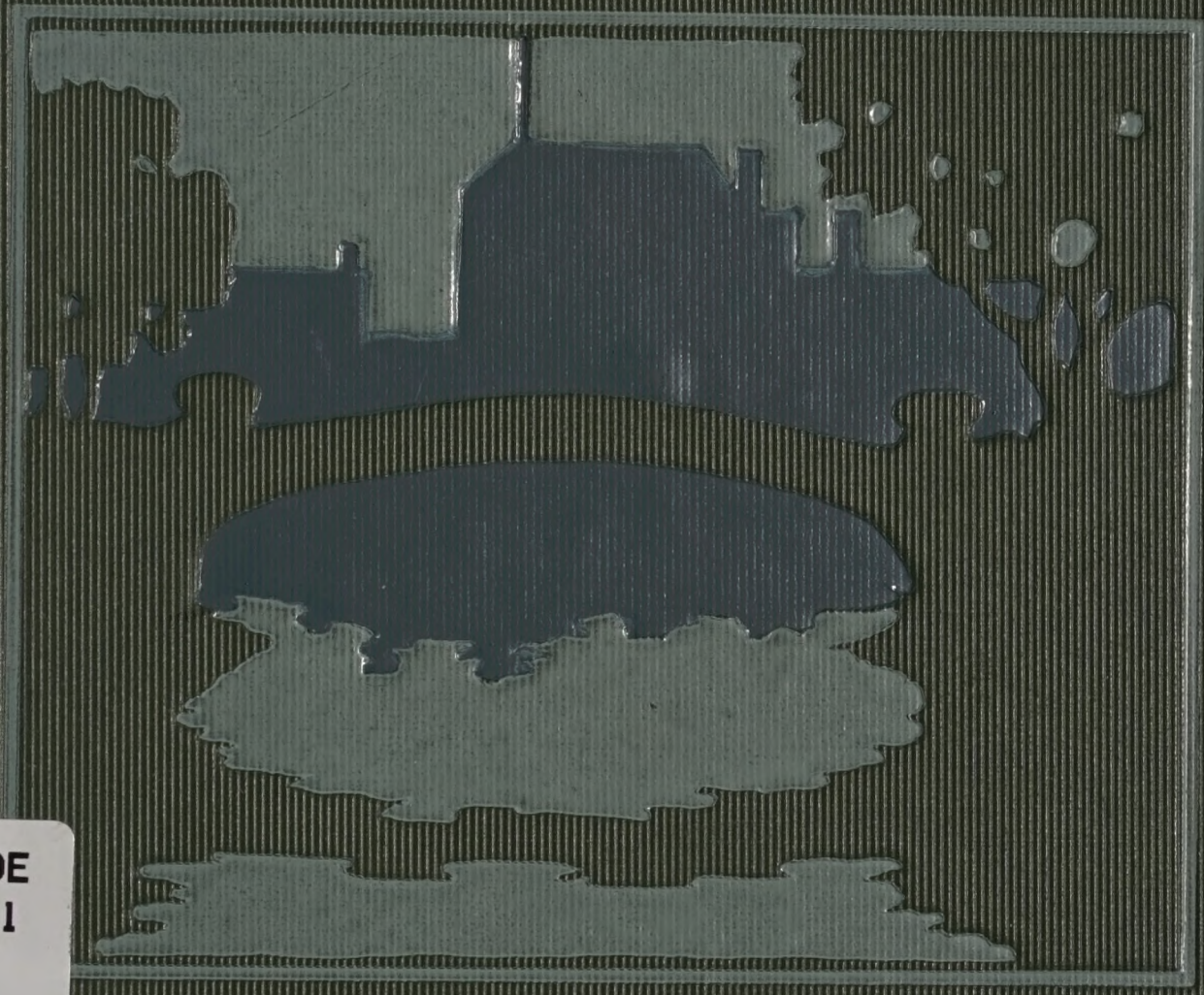
The RUNAWAY PLACE



WALTER PRICHARD EATON
and
ELISE MORRIS UNDERHILL

THE RUNAWAY PLACE

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BY

WALTER PRICHARD EATON

AND

ELISE MORRIS UNDERHILL

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THE RUNAWAY PLACE

Around Saint Gaudens' golden group
A little child pursues his hoop,
Nor sees the twitching charger led
By Victory, above his head;
Of war and memories of war
He knows not; Life lies all before;
Just now sufficient for the day
It is to seize the moment's play;
And so around Saint Gaudens' group
The little child pursues his hoop.

Beyond the child we blithely mark
The long green garden of the Park,
And hear a call that will not down
For all the clamor of the town,
A Piper's call to run away
Until the weary feet can play,
Until the soul forgets its pain
And dares to be a child again:
The summoning grows fainter? Hark—
The Piper's marching up the Park!

THE RUNAWAY PLACE

CHAPTER I

IN WHICH WE RUN AWAY TO THE YEAR BEFORE LAST

VICTORY, her wings agleam, was leading General Sherman southward down the Avenue with conquering stride. Overhead, the fresh young green that sprayed the trees hung like a soft veil, and over that, the blue of a May morning. The gay procession of carriages rolled by on the asphalt. The green hip-roof of the new Plaza Hotel shone in the sun, far aloft above the bare cliff-wall of the building, which suggests curiously a man without eyebrows. Nurse-maids and children were alive in the paths as far as the eye could see. And Philip Stoughton, pausing by Saint Gaudens' bronze to look

about him, was well content. And why not? The belated Spring had come at last with a rush and burst of leaf and blossom; and he was out of a job, to enjoy it at his boundless leisure.

Philip Stoughton cherished no delusions as to "the dignity of labor." He admitted its too frequent necessity, but further he would not go. No activity, he would have told you, that was not so joyfully indulged in as to become play, could be called dignified, because it is the right of every person to be happy, and to compel that person into unwilling or non-enthusiastic activity argues an essential lack of dignity in the scheme of things. In other words, he would have spoken of the indignity of labor. "The child and the artist," he would have added, "because their activities are the most spontaneous, are the most dignified members of society."

It is hardly necessary now, perhaps, to state that Philip Stoughton was a boyish young man who aspired to a literary reputation.

However, one has to yield a little to a theory, held so strongly that it induces the theorizer to forego, not only his "undignified" daily toil, but the weekly reward therefor. Stoughton had signed his name to the pay-roll of a down-town firm for the last time that very morning, and now he stood beneath the gleaming, triumphant bronze, as care-free as a bird, his eye, to be sure, alert for "copy," (for in his happiest or idlest moments, the artist's instinct is alive), but in his heart longing for a playmate. Spring was all about him—even the asphalt smelled of it. The long, green garden of the Park stretched invitingly northward. He tilted his hat back the fraction of an inch on his forehead, and swung in up the path.

By just what process of suggestion the ducks in Lake Swan Boat made him think of Mozart, it would perhaps be hard to guess. There were ducks floating gracefully in the water, and ducks waddling gawkily on the bank. One even came grunting and wabbling up to him, in dumb appeal for food. As

it stood there in stupid supplication, it suggested Masetto—yes, that was it, Masetto, while the lords and ladies danced the minuet, and Don Giovanni stole his love away! That was the picture which fired the train of suggestion: from a duck to Mozart was the jump of an instant. Stoughton walked on whistling, and what he whistled was, "Là ci darem." He had finished it once, and was beginning it over again, in love with the tune, as he pulled up an incline to a rustic summer-house. He had finished the Don's first luscious, tempting phrase (if the real Don Juan went about singing tunes like that Leporello's list is quite intelligible!) and paused for breath, when from the summer-house the tune was taken up in a frailer whistle, and Zerlina made known her hesitation.

He bounded up the path into the rustic shelter, and looked eagerly about. Nobody was there save a girl, who sat with her back to the southern sun, looking idly out across the Park. She paid no attention to him, she gave no sign that she was aware of his presence.

He stood facing her, in the center of the summer-house, and whistled the next phrase of the duet, the Don's second theme. There was no reply. The girl still looked idly out over the Park.

"Must I do the whole duet myself?" said he.

The girl brought her gray eyes slowly around to focus upon him with a cool, steady glance. "Sir," she said.

Stoughton laughed. "Oh, come now," he remarked cheerfully, "there are six good reasons why you shouldn't adopt that attitude."

The girl was still silent. She was on the defensive, and a bit frightened, it seemed, at what she had undoubtedly brought upon herself. Whether she had intended to bring it upon herself was what most interested Stoughton just then, and that was what, he knew, would be most difficult to find out.

"Don't you want to know what any of the reasons are?" he asked.

"Perhaps not," said the girl.

"Good! Then I'll tell you," said he, holding up his left hand, fingers spread, and tallying off the reasons with the other. "First, we both love Mozart, and that constitutes a spiritual bond. Second, we are both young and not unattractive (pardon my qualified flattery of you, since the phrase also applies to me!), but alone, which Nature never intended young and attractive persons of opposite sexes to be. Third, it's a magazine short-story tradition that we should get acquainted in Central Park, so we must in the cause of literature. Fourth, I'm only ten years old today, and want somebody to play with, oh, dreffful bad! Fifth, it's a May morning. And, sixth, you've put your foot—I mean your whistle—into it now, and cannot retreat with honor."

The girl flushed a little under her red hat, and a barrier dropped from her eyes. Watching her keenly, he saw it drop, and she knew he saw it, and flushed deeper. She was a small woman, a trifle pale and tired as if from toil, and there was something almost wistful

in her face as she inquired, though smiling, "What was that fourth reason?"

Stoughton scratched his head. "Dear me, I got them off so fast—oh, yes!—fourth, I'm only ten this morning, and want somebody to play with dreffully."

"You're *really* only ten?" she inquired.

"Really."

"How did you manage it?"

"Oh, it's easy," he laughed. "First, you get spring fever; then you realize that man wasn't made to work, but to play, and throw up your job. And then you run away to Central Park." He swept his hand toward the north. "This is the great Run-away Place, right in the heart of town," he added. "You step into a picture-book world, and anything may happen. You see, something has happened already! You are ten years old because you believe again in wonders, and, lo! —a playmate. Come on back with me, little playmate, to the year before last!"

And he swept her a low picture-book bow and held out his hand.

The girl looked at him with a little catch in her breath. "The year before last!" she said. "Oh, more than that! Take me back more than that!"

"You can't come at all if you're literal," he laughed. "But I know you're not. Your name, by the way, is Marie."

The girl stood up and took a step toward him. Then she paused, plucked at her skirt with one hand, hung her head, a finger in her mouth, and asked in a baby voice, "What's your name, 'ittle boy?"

"Minth's Philip," he lisped, falling gaily into the game. "Tum on 'n thee the thwan boats."

But she had grown up again, and shook her head gravely. "No, little boy," she said, "that wouldn't do at all. You caught me off my guard for a minute. See, I admit it. I'm foolish, if you choose, or just like the others. But you will be a nice boy, and run away now."

"I will be a nice boy, and do nothing of the sort," he answered. "Nor will I say, or

think, you're like the others—which isn't true. Nor will I argue with you. There is nothing to argue. Either you want to play with me or you don't want to play with me, and that's all children know or need to know. Instead, I'll answer for you. Answer: you *do* want to play with me." He fell once more into the game. "Tum on!" he cried, imperiously stamping his foot.

The girl looked at him a moment, very solemnly. Then she smiled, gave her head a kind of defiant little toss, and they moved out of the summer-house together.

"Mind you, Philip," said she, "I'm coming because you're only ten to-day. Your other reasons were no good at all."

"Not even the last, Marie?" he inquired.

"Oh, that least of all," she said with a laugh.

"May I grow up again for a moment?" said he, as they skipped down the path.

"Why?" she asked.

"I want to argue that last point with you."

"You may not—to-day," she answered.

"Good!" he cried. "It's a promise! I don't want to now!"

The girl turned very red for a child of ten, and Philip was triumphant. Southward smoked the city; the great apartment houses faced frowning down; the lofty hotel gables gleamed in the sun; somewhere there was a smothered rattle and roar of traffic; and northward, into the welcome green of the Park, up tree-lined paths, and past flowers and green grass, they sped—two children searching for adventure!

* * * * *

And by and by, oh, a long, long way off from Fifty-ninth Street, where the big grown-up world ends, they came upon a mighty lake, and then befell them a wonderful adventure, which is known as

The Adventure of the Sending Boat.

[*Gentle Reader, do you know what is a Sending Boat? A Sending Boat is a mighty, marvelous craft to bear one into Old Romance, and you learn all about it (if you care to learn more than is here*

set down) in a certain true fairy tale made by William Morris, and called "The Water of the Wondrous Isles." It was because Child Philip and Child Marie discovered that each had read and loved this book, that they elected to play Sending Boat, which has to be played, of course, in Early English. And if you wonder at the Early English which here follows, do not blame us. We did not write it, as presently you will learn, if you are patient.]

WHILOM, as tells the tale, came two children, a man child hight Philip and a girl child hight Marie, (who was so fair to look upon that many passersby turned to gaze beneath the red hat that sat full saucily upon her head)—came these children unto the banks of a mighty lake, to a spot hard by a boat house, where were many boats that a man might hire for a space by the payment of a silver coin. And so they stayed before the boat house, and right eagerly did they look out upon the water, gleaming in the sun, whereon swans sailed gracefully. Eke were there both white swans and black swans with

red bills, and little brown ducks beside. And there were boats moored all in a row by the bank; and of canoes a few; but mostly the boats were row-boats.

Then spake the child hight Philip, Yon water is the Water of the Wondrous Isles, and mayhap on the farther shore, a long day's journey hence, shall we find the little House by the Wood, and therein the Black Knight and Birdalone. Shall we adventure forth upon the deep?

And answered the child hight Marie: Oh, yes, let's hire a canoe and go find Birdalone! I've always wanted to meet her!

Despite, spake Philip, your strange language, which I scarce may understand, I deem you give consent, and would fain look upon the sweet form of Birdalone. Come, we will learn the secret of the Sending Boat.

So they went before an olden carle, whose eyes were weak and watery, with great spectacles over them, and the beard of him was white and long; and of him they bought a little check, for he was full short of sight for

all his spectacles, and knew not they were but children. Another carle, who stood by the landing, took of them this check, and made question of them thus: Do you know how to handle a canoe? They tip over easy.

And the man-child was about to wax mightily wroth, but Child Marie laid restraining hand upon his arm, whispering: Thy sense of humor, Boy Philip, would'st thou mislay it?

So Boy Philip put his wrath away and quoth most humbly, Sir, I think I do.

And then he would have made request for a knife or some sharp thing to prick his arm withal till the blood should come, that he might smear the Sending Boat bow and stern. But he reflected how the carle wot not at all that it was a Sending Boat, and so might he be hard put to find reason in the request. Therefore he accepted a paddle, and the two children fared forth over the deep water.

But when they had passed around the point of rocks hight Chip-sparrow Point, for that they saw in a bush just over the water's edge

two chip-sparrows struggling with the problem of domestic architecture (Child Marie affirmed they could not agree where to put the pantry), Philip laid down the paddle, and, pricking his arm with a hatpin right quickly supplied by Child Marie, smeared with the blood which flowed, the Sending Boat both bow and stern, and therewith he spake these words of the magic spell:

> The Child Philip's blood now
> Hast thou drunk, stern and bow,
> Awake, then, awake!
> And the westward way take:
> The way of the Wender forth into the Park,
> For the will of the Sender is bent on a lark.

Then Child Philip dipped his paddle lightly in astern, that he might, perchance, as he explained, steer the boat clear of rock or reef, and breathless they waited for the spell to work. The Sending Boat stirred, and then shot out swiftly across the waters of Black Swan Bay. Westward, far off, they saw gleaming mountains, level-topped and smok-

ing like tired volcanoes. On one hand a great wood came down to the very edge of the water, and therein was neither wood-reeve nor way-warden to be seen, and men held it to be mighty great and terrible to adventure in. But the children in the Sending Boat feared naught of it, out on the water, nor did they fear to see, over the top of Chip-sparrow Point, the roof of the boat house fade from sight. They set their faces westward over the Shining Water, and the Sending Boat sped on.

By and by it shot under the great arching span of a bridge that straddled from one bank clear to the other with a single leap, and was hight Pansy Bridge, for that at either end, in jars of carven stone, were pansy flowers growing, with the faces, if you look at them quite closely, of little men and women, it may be of kings and queens, for mostly they wear purple. And beyond Pansy Bridge the lake spread out most mightily, so that the children were sore put to see the shores on either side, or whither they were going, save that on the

right lay a green eyeot, and ducks thereon making a great quacking.

Ever westward sped the Sending Boat, and anon they were ware of a shore and trees thereon, and amid the trees a little hut standing, so that they cried out as it were with one voice: Birdalone's house by the wood! Then the Sending Boat came to a stop close to the shore, but not so close as that her bow keel grazed the gravel, for within the boat, under the rail, was a blue sign bearing the mystic characters:

NOTICE
The Department of Parks
Orders that Persons Using this Boat
MAKE NO LANDINGS
Except at the Boat House.

Now these characters meant that a spell had been laid upon the boat aforetime, by a mighty band of magicians hight Park Commissioners, for that it could only make landing at the boat house of the olden carle, he of the spectacles.

So then, as ye may well guess, Child Marie and Child Philip did right eagerly turn in their places and gaze at Birdalone's house, searching if they might discover Birdalone herself, or any sight of her. But naught they saw at first, save a great monster hight collie-dog in those parts, which came down to the bank, barking most lustily at them; and a little smoke from the chimney, that savored of onions. Whereat Child Marie's nose went up, and thus she spake: Nay, Birdalone is not there, methinks, else would the mid-day meal be not so churlishly savored.

But Child Philip answered naught, being wise, since in his heart to him the savor of boiled onions was good. Yet he doubted not, however, that Child Marie was right. And anon came forth from the hut a fell glowering dame of many summers, to hang a dish clout on the line: so then they wit well that Birdalone was not there, having fled, mayhap, to Green Eyeot, or unto the far parts across the gleaming waters.

Sore disappointed were they as they spake

unto the Sending Boat again the spell, whereat it stirred and turned and shot out over the deep. But Child Marie was not down-hearted. Who knows, quoth she, but we may yet find Birdalone, or at least fall in with some strange adventure ere the voyage be done?

And even as she spake, there came floating to them over the water a strange somewhat they deemed at first a tiny log. But when they brought it dripping forth, they wot it was a roll of manuscript bound with a band of rubber, and how it came there neither one nor the other could tell, though it seemed some careless manchild of the guild hight authors must have dropped it from his pocket on the edge of the water, or it might be from a boat, and wot not of his loss.

Child Marie shook therefrom the water, and with gingerly care to hold it far from the dainty gown in which she was dight, undid it on the floor of the Sending Boat. Eke was there no author's name therein, but the tale was done neatly into print on a machine hight

a typewriter, and albeit the ink had run and blurred in places, for that the water had soaked in among the leaves, Child Marie could read it well enough. And as the Sending Boat glided across the Shining Water and under the banks of the Great Forest, she read this strange tale to Child Philip, which was called, according to the author who had set it down,

The Iliad of the Doughnut.

"No, I shall not go there again this summer," said Penrose, emphatically.

"Why not?" asked Cutting. "I thought you regarded it as the most nearly ideal summer resort in Maine, which means anywhere, according to your bigoted view. Sometimes I suspect you of being a Yank."

"I did, I do," Penrose answered, ignoring the comment. "But the presence of certain other people who regard it in the same light makes it intolerable. Until I hear that the old crowd frequent it no more, I shall seek pastures new to tan in. They used to be such

a congenial crowd, too, till last summer. The doughnut is to blame."

"The doughnut!" exclaimed Cutting. "How in the name of goodness did the doughnut figure?"

"How did it not figure?" said Penrose, sadly. "It is a long tale, a melancholy tale. But I will try to tell you.

"To begin at the beginning, as the novelists used to do in the good old days of the three-decker, when people had time to read, you must know that the great farmhouse and its adjoining 'cottage' in Bethel have long been taken each summer by almost the same crowd of people. Summer after summer they have tramped together up the mountain behind the house, and picnicked on its top, in sight of the grand sweep of the Presidential Range. Summer after summer they have journeyed to Gorham, and made the trip up Washington through Adams' Ravine. Summer after summer they have gone through Grafton Notch on buckboards to the Rangeley Lakes, and sniffed with annual exclama-

tions of joy the mingled odor of pines and fresh water. And summer after summer evening they have sat in the big parlor, and listened while one read aloud, or played cards, or discussed topics of interest, in the most idyllic spirit of brotherly and sisterly love. The food was good, the beds good, the company good, the air and scenery superlative. It was the ideal.

"And it would have remained so for all time if the doughnut had not entered last July, like the apple on Olympus, to cause schism, disruption, open hostility.

"You see, the party was about equally divided geographically. A score of us came from New York or Southeastern Connecticut, and a score, the rest of the crowd, came from the vicinity of Boston. There was a music critic in the New York division, who once wrote a book on Wagner, in the big front bedroom of the main house, and had to keep that room forever after because anybody else who tried it had bad dreams. He and I were leaders on our side in the con-

troversy that arose. I don't say this in a boasting spirit; far from it. I have always been too ready to debate on all occasions, and this time I paid high for my fault. But truth compels me to admit that I was a leader. I felt there was a principle at stake.

"The Boston party, naturally enough, was led by a woman and a very young and self-assertive young man just out of Harvard. The woman was a spinster, not your comic-paper Boston type, but a stout, handsome, witty, well-dressed creature that one suspected had remained single from choice—until one had learned her uncomfortable controversial temperament. The young man was beneath notice, one would like to say; only one cannot. He would never stay beneath notice. He was the best swimmer, the best tennis and golf player, the best mountain climber, the most accommodating rascal to the women, the best reader of an evening, the best looking male in the place; at least, so the ladies thought. But ladies are never good judges of masculine beauty! If he

hadn't been there, I shouldn't have taken the opposite side so bitterly as I did and then, perhaps, I might have——"

"You might have what?" said Cutting.

"Well, I might have somebody to darn my stockings for me, if you must know," said Penrose. "She was of the Boston party, had been to Bethel every summer since she was a little child. I saw her grow up into the finest girl, oh, Cutting, the finest, altogether most adorable girl you ever set eyes on! Why, if Bethel were in the middle of the desert, it would be a summer paradise—with her there. And I came to love her, as every man of sense has to. I told her so, one day down by the Sunday River, and she laughed and skipped a stone three times, and I said she made my heart skip the same way; and she laughed still harder, and said I was an old dear. Think of that, you brute, and stop your own laughing! She called me an 'old dear,' though I'm not thirty-five, or not much more! And she wouldn't say any more then; but I was happy and hopeful. I knew she never

called that young Harvard upstart an 'old dear.'"

"I hope not," said Cutting. "They resent such familiarity—Harvard men. But how about the doughnuts?"

"I'm coming to them. Well, one day we had crullers on the table; you know, those round rings of dough, fried in a kettle, that aren't half bad with coffee—if you have the digestive apparatus of an ostrich. I asked the Boston spinster to pass me 'the crullers.'

"'You mean the doughnuts, don't you?' said she, sweetly.

"Now, I know pretty generally what I mean, and I don't care to be picked up in my speech by a woman. 'I mean the crullers,' said I, haughtily. 'I see no doughnuts on the table.'

"'And I see no crullers,' said she. 'I cannot be expected to pass what I don't see, in other words, to handle the intangible.'

"'The intangible is often visible, though,' said the Harvard upstart, butting in. 'Witness the view from our mountain top.'

"'Yes,' said the music critic, 'and you can always be relied on to pass it. You're a Bromide, and you quote Bangs. I suppose you're aware that your illustration is taken from the mouth of the Cheerful Idiot?'

"'*You* can never claim the adjective,' retorted the Harvard upstart, with his usual insolence. 'But we wander from the subject. Are those things on the table, which Mr. Penrose desires, doughnuts or crullers, that's the question. And I'll answer it. They are doughnuts.'

"'They are not,' snapped the music critic. 'They are crullers. Anybody who knows anything, knows that doughnuts are spherical in shape, solid, and made of different material. Your education on this point, as on some others I might mention, has been sadly neglected.'

"'Why don't you lay the blame on the elective system?' asked the Upstart. 'Now, I don't know how Wagner would compose a doughnut motif—save that it would be sad and low—but I do know that a cruller is six

inches long, composed of two twists of dough curled about each other. A doughnut is what we have on the table.'

"And here the discussion became general. To a unit, the New York and Connecticut people took my side, affirming that the objects offered on the table were crullers, and that a doughnut was a spherical mass of raised material, solid, or containing a bit of jelly. The twist affairs were, if they were anything, a variety of crullers, we were willing to concede. The Boston and Massachusetts party, with similar unanimity, stoutly maintained that doughnuts were the ring affairs on the table, that crullers were the twists; and they would not concede that real doughnuts had any standing in court whatever. Most of them had never even seen or heard of the real doughnut. I never knew till then how provincial Boston and Massachusetts, if they are two places, really are.

"The controversy was carried outside the house, into the solemn stillness of the mountain twilight. We forgot to watch the sun-

set shadows creep over the high hills. We forgot to take our evening stroll through the dewy meadows. We forgot to read or to play cards. All that evening, divided into two camps, we discussed with warmth that gradually developed into positive ill-feeling, the tremendous question: 'What is a doughnut?'

"The Harvard Upstart thought he had clinched the whole question when he quoted the magazine advertisement taken from a still more ancient proverb: 'To make a doughnut, take a hole and put some dough around it.' But this was met with a storm of rebuttal. Proverbs are notoriously wrong; the proverb was probably coined by some ignorant Bostonian; a magazine will print any falsity, so long as it is paid for; names may shift their meaning, and the discussion is over the present definition of the term: and the like.

"When we retired that night, I was in a hot rage, which was by no means cooled when I saw the Harvard Upstart bidding

Her goodnight on the veranda of the 'cottage' next to the main house, where I slept. She had taken but little part in the controversy, but her sympathies were plainly on the mistaken side.

"The following day, the discussion was resumed at breakfast, and was aggravated by a large plateful of the offending food left over from the night before. We had been so excited then that we had neglected to eat it up. Already a noticeable division of the household had begun. When we set off for a tramp that morning, the cruller party, headed by myself and the music critic, wanted to climb Bear Mountain. The doughnut contingent got a fool notion into their heads that it would be better to tramp across the river in the meadows, though the day was ridiculously hot. The result was that we each went our separate way. I was too stuffy to give in, and so were the rest of our side, and I witnessed the melancholy spectacle of the Upstart setting out with Her at his side, while I walked in the opposite direction, with a

simpering young thing from Danbury, who bored me till I was positively rude.

"Well, the hostilities kept up, fed by renewed controversy every time crullers were served at table, which was rather often. If we played foursomes, it was always two Doughnuts against two Crullers. Croquet and tennis games became tests of merit between the parties to the great controversy. We no longer travelled in a big bunch, but in two bunches; if the Crullers went fishing, the Doughnuts went the other way for berries. If the Doughnuts wanted a drive, they found the Crullers had engaged all the teams, and invited enough extra guests from the hotel up in the village to use them.

"A new arrangement of seating at table soon worked itself out, and across the intervening space we positively glared at each other, like Guelfs and Ghibellines. The music critic grew more ill-natured, the Boston spinster more caustic in her remarks about New York and New Yorkers generally. I became more pigheaded and stuffy than ever, ready to

take the opposite side on any question. Only the Harvard Upstart retained his cheerful, disgusting good nature, a fact not hard to understand when he enjoyed Her companionship so much more than I did, now that the camp was divided against itself.

"Well, to make a long story short, the time came for me to go back to the city, and I corralled Her one evening at twilight, in spite of the efforts of the Upstart to thwart me, and led her down to our little cosey corner on the bank of the Sunday River. The deep pool where the river broadened out was still as glass, and mirrored the mountain tops and the evening star, which laid its silvery track right to our feet. It was the hushed, solemn hour of the day, when the soul should be at peace, and love supreme.

"I addressed her passionately. I told her again of my love, of my devotion; I reminded her that on this very spot a month before she had been at least kind to me, giving me hope. And I asked her for a final answer before I went back—an answer that would make me

either the happiest man in the world or the most miserable. All the eloquence that was in me, in the hour, in the occasion, I poured forth."

"Quite in the approved fashion," said Cutting, in his dry way. "And what did she say?"

"She said," continued Penrose mournfully, "that she had loved me a little—that perhaps she had loved me more than a little, and might have come to love me enough to marry me—before the doughnut-cruller controversy. But that controversy, she declared, had shown me to her what I am—stubborn, bent on my own way, not open to reason. Then she looked up at the darkening hills, paused a moment, while the great hush of the world poured around us, and said softly: 'If you will admit that you're wrong, if you will acknowledge that a doughnut is a round ring, such as we have at table here, I'll—I'll marry you still.'"

Cutting laughed.

"Don't laugh, you brute," said Penrose.

"It was no laughing matter, I assure you. It was ridiculous, if you will. Was ever a man put in a more ridiculous position than that? But it was not laughable. I loved her too much."

"I still think it laughable," said Cutting. "It was so easy to win her, after all."

"What!" cried Penrose. "Easy? Do you think I would give up a principle for a woman's foolish whim? I admit that for a moment I was tempted. She looked so lovely there in the dusk. And I loved her so! But I was not tempted long. I told her that if she really loved me she would make no such ridiculous demand as that. She would not ask a man to sacrifice his principles. I told her, in short, that I could not accede to her request. It was a test she had no right to require.

"She said, 'Very well,' quite calmly, though I think she was a little pale, and rose to her feet. At that instant the solemn hush was broken by the call of a bird in the thicket close to us. The insects, as by prearranged

signal, began their evening hum; and the wind sprang up, rippling the pool, so that the star track went out in the soft commotion.

"We walked back to the house in silence, and she retired at once. The next morning I left. As I climbed into the rig to go to the station, I saw Her and the Upstart setting forth on a fishing trip."

"Well," said Cutting, after a long silence. "You have given her up for good, eh? And the Upstart, did she marry him?"

"She——

and here the tale stopped abruptly, for that the water had washed the last sheet away, or mayhap a water bird had pecked thereat, under the impression that reading maketh a full duck. Child Marie looked and looked, making search among all the other sheets, but no ending could she find.

Alas, cried Child Philip, the tale leaves us overmuch in doubt, for I would fain know if by chance he won the fair dame he longed for, or if he stood steadfast to his error. The

Lady or the Doughnut, might it now be called.

Then Child Marie: Error, say you? Nay, it was she who was in error, though methinks it like he longed for her so sore that he gave way to her belief. Wit ye well, Child Philip, those round rings of dough aforesaid *are* crullers.

Wit ye well, cried Child Philip angrily, they are *not!* They are everywhere hight doughnuts by all who know.

Crullers! said Child Marie.

Doughnuts! shouted Child Philip.

And the Sending Boat shook and was near to capsizing.

Be they what they may, quoth Child Marie, with a sudden gurgle, I would I had one, or maybe two, this minute.

And Child Philip, laughing too, cried out: Would I had a full dozen, fresh from the frying kettle: for long have we adventured, and the hour of midday has passed. And thus was disasterous controversy averted.

So then he sped the Sending Boat for

home, and under Pansy Bridge they glided, and the roof of the boat house loomed in sight. Past Chip-sparrow Point, up to the dock, sped the Sending Boat, where the carle awaited them to help them forth, and the other carle, the olden one, still sat at his little window to take of adventurers their piece of silver. Nor did he discover even now—being weak eyed and old, as aforesaid—that they were but children.

So they walked to the gate of the Runaway Place, and Child Philip, with many words and much pleading, won from his companion a promise that on the morrow she would once more meet him in the summer-house that crowns the mount known to those who are wise in Park-lore as Mount Mozart. Then parted they, not, ye may guess, without a backward glance and a flash of the eyes. And Child Philip, left alone upon the corner, looked about him and saw that men and women were going to and fro with serious faces, intent upon their toil, whereat he smiled softly, quietly, to himself.

[*Here endeth the tale which is called, Of the Adventure of the Sending Boat, which was set down by Child Philip that evening in his chambers to be read in after-while to Child Marie, together with the manuscript which is called, The Iliad of the Doughnut, found floating on the Shining Water.*]

CHAPTER II

THE MAGIC CASEMENT

VICTORY was still leading General Sherman southward with conquering stride, under a blue May sky, when Philip Stoughton entered the Park the following morning. The gay carriages rolled by, the green roof shone in the sun. Yet there was something wistful in his mood; and as he began the ascent to the summer-house, the immortal minuet came with a certain sadness from his lips. He paused to listen. The girl was answering him from her seat under the rustic shelter. Her whistle was faint, a woman's whistle, so faint that he lost it now and again in the screams of nearby children, the call of birds, the rattle of traffic from the roadway. It, too, was sad—sad as every perfect tune must be when caught amid the more discordant noises of the world—sad

with its own perfection. Yet just now it was sad with a certain added wistfulness, so that he knew her mood, too, had changed.

"Good-morning, Marie," he said. "You have come!"

She looked at him brightly, yet gravely. "Did you doubt that I would?" she asked.

"I *hoped* that you would," said he. "I wrote a little story about the Sending Boat last night on the chance that we would play together again and I might read it to you. But I wasn't sure that the Run-away Place would mean enough to you to overcome the sort of scruples most women have."

The girl smiled. "Like Zerlina," she said, "I would and yet I would not! But, also like Zerlina, you see I'm here! Perhaps, Boy, you can't guess how much the Run-away Place means to me."

He looked at her closely. "Wistful little Marie," he said, and there was almost a caress in his voice, as his glance fell steadily on her pale face. "Wistful little Marie! I don't know what it is; I don't want to know

—now. All in good time, you will tell me. But now we will go back into the day before yesterday again, only we shall not run to-day, I guess, but saunter slowly and let old memories of childhood have their way with us. Shall we do it that way?"

The girl looked at him gravely. "Yes," she murmured, "we will do it that way. But how did you know that was the way I wanted to do it this morning?"

"I'm a boy—you forget," he answered. "Boys understand many things that are sealed to them later, which is why grown-ups pluck so clumsily amid the heart-strings of a friend."

"But how did you know about the memories?"

"Ah! that's because you are a K.S.," he smiled, "or because I am a K.S.—which means Kindred Spirit, you know. All K.S.'s love, in their quieter moments, to indulge in 'minute and tender retrospect,' to go back slowly over the paths of their lives into the dear days of childhood. That is the way

they refresh their spirits, that is the way they keep young."

"Boy," said she, "you *are* a K.S.! You are wonderful! Let's go back, back, back!"

And by and by, in their wanderings, they came upon a high bank, and on the bank was set a stone tower with steps leading up to it, and they climbed the steps, and before them was spread a sheet of water, which they greeted with a little cry of pleasure. Into the tower there was let a door of iron grating, like a dungeon door, which stood open now.

So they entered, and climbed up damp winding stairs of stone, till suddenly on the landing there opened before them in the stone a little casement, and in this casement was framed a picture out of a dream—blue, quiet water stretching North, without a boat on its rippled surface, lonely water that might have been in the wilderness. Far away, where the water ceased, were green trees against the hazy distance and then the great blue sky. To left and right the vivid, grassy banks and the blossoms of the Park just peeped into the

picture, to give it softness and grace. But never a sign was there of the teeming town. The damp walls of the tower, closing in around the casement frame, shut out the world. And they stood at gaze, those two, and sighed with the sudden pleasure of it, and Philip murmured, "Keats!"

She quoted, slowly:

"Charmed magic casements, opening on the foam
Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn."

"And yet," he reflected, "it's really not that at all. Here is no foam, no perilous sea, nothing forlorn. It's not Keats at all, yet it strangely affects one; it brings a quiver and stir into my imagination—old memories wake, just as if this window in Central Park were a magic casement, or were the falling cadence of the most haunting stanza in an ode by Keats."

"Oh, Boy, Boy!" cried Marie, "a window in Central Park! How can you say it? Don't you know that this *is* a magic casement? That's why your imagination stirs and

wakes. Every window that lets the eye out of a dark place and frames suddenly a picture of green things or water, is a magic casement, has something of the quality of poetry. But this one is a magic casement indeed, for I can see through it into the dim land behind To-day, the dear, dim land of long ago!"

Philip drew close to her on the narrow landing and she turned her face up to his.

"How well you understand things, don't you?" he smiled. She colored, smiling at him in her grave, pleased way, but saying nothing. Then they faced once more the casement which held its still, sweet picture, and for a time he frowned in silence, as if the memories were gathering behind his brow. Finally he spoke:

"The call of water stretching out! The still, hot sun! That long hill beyond the schoolhouse that used to look as if the sea lay just on the other side! Later, in college, I read somewhere in Ruskin—'Modern Painters,' I think—that a level hill against the sky used to give him the same sense of the sea.

That's why I like Ruskin. How they come back to me, those dead memories!"

"Tell me about them," said a voice at his side.

He began slowly, hesitatingly, as if the pictures were forming with difficulty, and he whimsically cast the story into the third person. But as he talked, his words came more freely, till at the end they were running with a kind of eloquence, and the girl listened very quietly, looking up into his face—though he did not know it—with covert admiration. And the story he told was called:

The Other Side of the Hill.

THE boy lay under a cluster of choke-cherry trees at the edge of the mowing, and watched a farmer slouch across the stubble, surrounded to the knees by a swarm of startled grasshoppers. Beyond the distant river-meadow he could see a thin film of heat rising from the railroad bed, and now and then he caught the glint of steel, as if the rails were alive and stirring. Still farther

away was a long, level hill, and then—the sky, the blue, deep, mysterious sky.

His eyes, chameleon like, deepened too as he gazed, and grew big with dreams. He did not hear the hot click, click of the mowing machine in the next field, the shouts of the driver, the dry shrill of insects in the grass. He did not even hear a step beside him and the rustle of skirts.

"Why, Philip," said a voice that brought him to his feet and the blood to his face, "I nearly stepped on you! Is this the way you help with the mowing? I was coming to watch you work."

The boy shifted uneasily. "Dad didn't need me," he said. "We ain't goin' to begin on the meadow hay until to-morrow. Will you—will you set down?"

He motioned awkwardly to the patch of shadow under the choke-cherries.

The girl—she was perhaps ten years his senior—smiled ever so little, spread out her dainty skirt, and sank with a wonderful grace on the grass. He watched her with uncon-

cealed admiration. "A man has to shut himself up like a jack-knife to set down," he said. "You just come down like—like a maple leaf!"

"It's the skirt," she smiled. "You can't see."

The boy grew painfully red, and took his place beside her in a silence that for a time she made no effort to break. Then she said, "I'm going home Monday, Phil, did you know it?"

The boy's mouth quivered, but he did not answer. She continued, "Your funny schools up here begin in August, don't they? You'll be going back to your books on the same day. I suppose you're sorry for that."

"Might as well go to school as anythin' else," he replied.

She did not ask him why. Instead she pointed toward the distant hill. "See, Philip," she said, "while you're in school sometimes this winter you can look out of the window and think that I'm on the other side of that hill. Will you?"

He gazed at her with astonished eyes. "I guess I will," he said.

"We've had lots of fun this summer, haven't we?" she went on, gayly. "And you've been a dear boy to me, Phil, and shown me all the lovely things in the country, and taught me that real rabbits are brown instead of white—wasn't I stupid not to know that?—and I shall never forget you. Perhaps I'll come back next summer, and we can go fishing all day up river. We never got that party this summer, did we?"

"How far on the other side of the hill will you be?" he asked.

She laughed. "Maybe a hundred miles," she said. "I'll be in a big city by the ocean, where the ships come in. Did you ever see the ocean?"

"Once," he answered. "It frightened me!"

"Frightened you? Why?"

The boy thought a moment. "I don't know," he said. "It was a year ago. Uncle Amos took me to Boston, and we went to

Nantasket, and I went down near it, and it seemed to be calling me away, away far off, to something I didn't know nothing about. I—I hear it calling yet when I look at that hill."

"You funny boy," said she. "What do you mean?"

"I can't explain," he answered. "Only you don't see nothing beyond that hill, and it looks as if the ocean was just over there. The sky goes down behind it just like it does into the ocean. When I look at it a long time it makes me afraid the way the sea did."

He pulled up a weed and tossed it into the pasture. "I feel the same way looking at you sometimes," he added.

The girl shot a quick glance at him. "Philip," she said soberly, "you mustn't be a silly boy."

"I can't help it," he answered doggedly, "—the way I feel, can I?"

She had no rejoinder for this, looking away almost in embarrassment. The boy was aware of a subtle change. He moved a little closer

to her, and laid his fingers on her skirt, stroking it ever so little. Gently the girl put out her hand to remove his fingers, with a quiet, "Don't, Philip"—and a brown, strong hand closed over hers and held it fast. He lifted it to his face, and rubbed his cheek against it, looking at her with big, eager eyes.

"I'm not afraid any more, I'm happy!" he said suddenly, creeping against her side. At the touch of her he shivered, and as suddenly the tears came, and he buried his face on her breast. He did not know what was the matter. The sobs just came, as if he were choking with a great disturbance within, that somehow the touch of her caused. His face felt her bosom heave and he was almost sick with the fragrance of her, the new, strange fragrance. Then he felt her bosom grow calmer. She lifted his face and kissed him on the lips.

"Philip," she said, "I shall never come back from the other side of the hill, because—because you will never be afraid of me any more!"

Then she left him.

He was eating bread and milk at mid-day, Monday, when she drove by on her way to the station. The boy ran out to say good-bye, and she put a faded brown book in his hands.

"I found it up at the house," she said. "They said I could have it for you. Some day, if you study hard, you will know what the title means. But please think when you read it, Phil, of the Lady on the Other Side of the Hill. Good-bye!"

"Good-bye," said the boy dully, with an awkward shake of the hand. He did not finish his bread and milk, but trudged back toward the schoolhouse with his faded brown book in his hand. "Thalatta, a book for the Sea Side," he read on the title page, and opposite, in her own hand, his name and hers. Some other name, in faded ink, had been erased.

He hid the book under his blouse as he drew near the school, that sat unshaded by the dusty road, over the brown river and the

railroad crossing, with its warning signs like gallows posts. But once safe behind his desk, he slyly brought his treasure forth again, and dipped furtively into its pages. It was his first poetry, and time began to slip by. He read now with a puzzled frown, now with quickened heart-beat for a ballad. And at last he read something that he has never forgotten, that long afterwards he found in the original German, with a pang of recognition:

The sea hath its pearls,
  The heaven hath its stars;
But my heart, my heart,
  My heart hath its love.

Great are the sea and the heaven,
  Yet greater is my heart,
And fairer than pearls and stars
  Flashes and beams my love.

Thou little, youthful maiden,
  Come unto my great heart!
My heart and the sea and the heaven
  Are melting away with love.

He heard his name called and hastily hid the book. The boy behind tried to prompt

him, but he was in a daze, and failed ignominiously. Yet he curiously did not care. He sat down again and looked out of the open window. There lay his hill—his hill and hers. Formed of a great even billow of close-cropped pasture that gathered all across the plain and swelled up against the blue, and bearing along its summit a crest of gray stone wall, it stood out sharp against the sky line and hid every trace of what might lie on the farther side. There was indeed something impressive in the way the blue arch curved down behind the ridge, something suggestive, something that filled you with wonder at all that lay beyond, even as the sea itself. Scattered clouds of pearly gray were banking now beyond the summit, faintly glowing with pink on their hazy edges, as they do out over the waters. Again the boy's eyes were big with dreams, but he was not frightened any more. The sea was over there, he knew it. If he should mount that pasture wall the blue ocean would stretch before him, calling by its music and its mystery, by its spirit of dreams, by

its sense of the infinite—calling to larger life and sweet, half-guessed emotions. He listened for the sound of the distant surf.

So he sat there by his desk, very still, gazing over the wall crested ridge deep to where the sky dropped down, and dreamed away the long, hot afternoon, while the droning buzz of the school room sang unheeded in his ears and fractions and spelling were the things unreal.

When he had done with the story there was silence. Philip looked out through the casement, with eyes that saw beyond the present, eyes that were wistful as those of a little boy. The girl looked covertly at him, and if he had faced upon her quickly he would have surprised something very like tears behind her long lashes. Finally she spoke:

"Did you—did the boy never see his lady on the other side of the hill again?" she asked.

Philip shook his head. "Of course not, that would spoil everything."

And if he had again faced upon her quickly, he would have discovered the hint of a passing flash of pleasure in the eyes which watched his face. But he did not turn. The mood of memory was still too strong upon him. And she said, "So you were a little country bred boy?"

"I grew up out of the soil, like a beet or a cabbage," he laughed. "And the country calls me still, calls me sometimes in the spring till I almost die of longing."

"Why don't you go back there?"

"There's a thing called ambition; but, tut, tut! what are we talking about? That's grown-up language, only fit for stupid people and stupid places—not here and now."

He turned upon her almost sharply, and this time he did surprise a wistfulness in her face. His own mood faded, and he put out his hand impulsively on hers, which rested on the casement ledge.

"You see, I'm a great selfish lout of a country boy running on about myself," he cried. "Now out with it, little Marie!"

She withdrew her hand gently. "I was not raised a beet or a cabbage," she smiled. "I grew up in a window box, I guess! For I was born and reared in this desert of brick and asphalt. And there were always people all about me, as well as houses and streets. The people were worse than the houses. Always the people—I could never get away from them! Yet I wanted to, even then. But sometimes we went into the country, and I lived a bit in the lands I read about. I was a terribly greedy reader, little boy! But even in the country the people followed me. Sometimes it seems as if my life had been a long chase to get away from just folks! Do you know what I mean?"

He nodded, smiling, though he really but dimly understood, and she went on:

"But once—one glorious summer—I got away, quite away; and this magic casement has brought it back to me, the memory of that escape, for I found a magic casement then, too, that looked out over blue water to Camelot."

"As far as that?" said he.

"As far as that!" she answered. "I'll try to tell you about it."

And the story was called:

The Little Lady of Shalott.

ALL day I had tried to escape Jessica and Jean, to read my book, my dear book, of knights and ladies, tourneys and quests, which was none the less thrilling and beautiful when I could not quite understand it. All day they had sought me out in each new hiding place and with the stupidity and dulness of thirteen had teased me to come away from that stuffy old book, and have some fun. Not that they really wanted me, but the summer day was long and they never could imagine new plays for themselves.

From the cherry tree to the hay loft, from the lower garden to the curtained window seat in the library, they had followed, their teasing voices scattering the silence around the white hermit's cell and mixing with the clash of shields. And now they were coming

again. I could hear them wondering "where I was this time," and oh, the meanness of it! If they only got hold of that book they would hide it where I couldn't find it for one while! "She's stuck up," I heard Jessica say, "because she likes to read more than we do." Stuck up! Because I would rather play with fairies and princes and great ladies than at their foolish games! Oh, the stupids!

But I could stand it no longer. Like a shadow I crept from the library and up the back stairs. Up, up, I went in a breathless hurry, thinking to sit on the topmost step till the hunters should grow weary, and turn their attention elsewhere. Past the top floor landing I sped blindly in my haste, then turned a jog in the wall, and brought my nose too suddenly against a little door. I suppose it had always been there, but we children rarely went above stairs in the few hours we spent indoors. I stood and looked at it, and listened—but there was no sound except a big fly which droned sleepily at being disturbed.

At last the voices were still. Then I saw a

little rusty key hanging on a nail in the wall, and I reached out and took it in my hand. My heart gave a thump as I thought of Blue Beard and Ali Baba and a dozen fairy tales all in a jumble, and something said in my ear, "You are going to have an adventure!" And I closed my eyes and said right out, "Oh, please, let it be a lonely one!" Then I put the key in the lock, turned hard on it, for it was rusty, and opened the little door—and there was the adventure.

It began with a little flight of twisty stairs. I shut the door behind me and crept up softly, there was such a hush all about, but when I got to the top, I said, "O!" so loud I made myself jump, and then I stood still and looked.

What I saw was a big, square room with a slanting top, that felt as if it had been asleep a very long time, for the dust was thick and there wasn't anything in it that wasn't a great many years old. Of course I knew I was in the garret, but I wouldn't have believed a garret could be so lovely as this. I

wondered why Aunt Adela had never told us about it, and why there weren't a lot of trunks and broken chairs and other things around. But there weren't. The only trunks I could see were three small ones trimmed with big nails, and on the tops of them the nails spelled "P. W." Then I knew they must have belonged to grandmother's oldest little girl, who would have been my Aunt Priscilla if she had lived till I came. I remembered that she was only sixteen when she died, and how she had been the flower of the family, they said; and I wanted to open the little trunks very badly, but I thought that would be mean.

I was almost afraid to walk around, it was so still. But then I wanted to explore the corners, and look out the little window with the queer panes, which were so covered with dust that the sun seemed to be shining through a mist. At last I crossed over to it on tip-toe, and pulled and pulled. I was almost ready to give up, when it came open with a jerk and scratched my finger. But what did that

matter, for out of the window I saw almost the whole world!

There was the lawn and the garden, with the wall of trees at the foot, and then the pasture and the orchard, and then more pastures that spread out like the green squares of my patchwork. Then there was a river, with a white sail moving on it, and beyond again a little city with faint towers, and farthest of all some hills that were very blue, with the clouds dropping over the edge like the boats that sail out of your sight at the seashore.

I could have stood there all day thinking of the wonderful tales that kept running in my head, but it was afternoon and I must explore my secret while the sun was still lighting it. I crept softly around, feeling all the time as though I were discovering treasures, for there was an old, high-backed sofa where I could sit and read, two little chairs, a great bureau with a drawer full of books, and, oh, it was too good to be true!—a real spinning-wheel.

I had been trying to make up my mind who

I was, but the minute I saw the wheel and remembered my scratched finger, I knew that I was the Sleeping Beauty. So I pulled a low chair in front of the wheel, where I could look through the window, and began to turn it, slowly at first, then faster, till it began to sing a little song. I looked at the trees at the foot of the garden and wondered how high they would be when I had slept a hundred years; I looked at the twisted stairway and wondered when the wicked fairy would come. And there was the real scratch on my finger. The sun came in through the little window, the bees hummed outside, the wheel hummed in the room—and the next thing I knew, my head bumped the back of the chair, and I opened my eyes and said, "How did you find me?" because I had been dreaming about the prince.

But there was no answer. The shadows were all about the room. The sun had gone down. Far away I heard a bell ringing. So I knew that I wasn't a princess any more that day. I took a last look out of the window

before I closed it. Then I crept down the twisty stairs and locked the little door, and never remembered till I was sitting at the tea-table that I had left my book behind me and had forgotten to read a word.

I was so busy thinking about my castle, and wondering who I would be the next day, that I didn't hear very much of what they were talking about, till I caught the name "Priscilla." Then I stopped dreaming pretty quick, and listened as hard as I could. Aunt Adela was talking to Uncle Stuart. They were looking at me, and she was saying, "I never noticed it before, but that child certainly has a look of Priscilla's younger pictures."

Uncle squinted up his eyes as if he were looking a long way off, and said, "I don't know but you're right, Adela. At any rate, she's more like her in temperament than either of ours."

I wasn't quite sure what he meant by temperament, but all of a sudden it came to me that perhaps she had liked to go up in the

old garret to play by herself, and that was the reason her things were up there, and it had been always kept as I had found it—and I loved it more than ever. I went over to Uncle Stuart. "Did she like to read and imagine things?" I asked him.

"Who? Priscilla?" he questioned.

"Yes," said I, "the one you were just talking about."

"I believe she did," he said slowly. "Mother always said she was a great dreamer. She might have been a poet. It's a pity she didn't live to grow up," he finished with a sigh.

But I hardly heard him. A thought had come into my head, a thought of a new play, and I could scarcely wait to begin it. I ran to the library, took down an album of old photographs, and hunted till I came to a page filled with pictures of the little girl Priscilla. Some were standing, some sitting, some were just of her head. But the one I liked best of all was where she was looking out of a window.

I took the book over to Aunt Adela.

"May I have this for a little while?" I asked. "I'll be very careful of it."

"Why, you funny child," said my aunt, "what do you want it for?"

"Just to look at," I said. "I like to think about her because she imagined things, too."

"Very well," said Aunt Adela, "don't lose it." She slipped the picture out of the page and handed it to me.

After I was in bed and the light was out I took the picture from under my pillow and whispered to it.

"To-morrow," I said, "you're going to play with me in the garret—just us alone—and you're going to look out of the real little window again, and see the city with the towers, which is where the knights live, and I'll read to you out of my book, and maybe some poetry, too, though sometimes the words are hard for nine and a half."

Priscilla didn't answer, but I had hardly expected she would, so I tucked her back under my pillow and went to sleep to dream

that I was a captive maiden in a tower guarded by two witches who looked like Jessica and Jean, and that Sir Launcelot came to rescue me and put me in a photograph album, and so I got out unseen.

All morning I went round with Priscilla in my pocket. When the twins weren't looking I would take her out and whisper to her, and tell her not to be impatient, though I guess she wasn't the only one who needed to be told that. After lunch Aunt Adela said she was going for a drive and we could go if we wanted to. I waited to see what the twins were going to do. Yes, they wanted to go. Then Priscilla and I would stay home. Aunt Adela was waiting for me to choose.

"Thank you, Aunt," I said, "if you don't mind I think we would rather not go this afternoon."

Aunt Adela looked surprised. "*We?*" she said, "but the twins *are* going."

Then I knew that I had spoken about Priscilla, too, and I grew very red and uncomfortable. I wasn't really happy again

until I saw the back of the carriage go out the gate. Then I took Priscilla in my hand and flew up the back stairs.

I opened the little door, and there was my castle with the sun shining through the misty window, and my knight-book on the couch. First I must put Priscilla where she could look out of a real window, then I would read to her and we would imagine. I fastened the picture against the wall so that she could look at the river and the towers, then I said, "Priscilla, I s'pose you know that's Camelot over there?"

The picture nodded its head ever so little.

"Well," I said, "we are going to play a very sad story to-day, because I feel just like imagining about sad things, and the lady in the story was a very sad person indeed. You see, she used to stand by the casement, which is just what we are doing, only she couldn't stop to look out, though she wanted to ever so badly—because there were so many interesting and wonderful people, like knights, that kept riding by. But all the time she

had to keep weaving their pictures and she could only look at them in a mirror, which 'hung before her all the year,' the book says. I should think she'd have got pretty tired.

"Well, one day while she was weaving and weaving, Sir Launcelot came riding along. He was the most beautiful knight in the world, and his armor was so bright it looked like a flame, and he was singing as he rode by the river. The lady saw him in her mirror, and she couldn't help it, but went to the window and looked out just like we're doing. Then the mirror cracked from side to side, so she knew she must die. I wish I knew why. She went out of her tower and down to the river and there she found a boat, so she lay down in it, and it floated on the stream to Camelot. When it got there the lady was dead and all the people and the knights came down to the water to see her, and they crossed themselves for fear, all except Launcelot, who was the bravest knight in the world, and the kindest. He just looked at her, and saw how beautiful she

was; then he said, 'God in His mercy lend her grace.' I guess He did if Sir Launcelot asked him."

I felt so sad by this time with imagining about the lovely dead lady, that before I knew it two tears splashed on the window sill, and then two more, but I didn't care if Priscilla did see, because I felt so nice inside. I always liked to feel sad that way, when the thoughts were just imagining ones—and then the sun made the tears look like diamonds on the dusty sill.

So I told Priscilla I was the kind girl in "Diamonds and Toads," but she was looking far over the towers, and I knew she was wishing that a knight would come riding by, so I didn't interrupt her, because that is a lovely play. So I played it too, until it began to get dark. Then I kissed Priscilla good-night and closed the window, for the nights were rather cool.

"To-morrow," I said, "we'll play Elaine. Then some other day we'll play 'Sister Ann, Sister Ann, do you see anything coming?'

which will be very exciting, because there's nearly always a cloud of dust somewhere."

And I got so interested thinking of the plays we would have that I forgot I was in a secret and talked out loud. But when I remembered, and put my hand over my mouth, there wasn't any sound, so I knew the secret was safe.

It was quite the best one I ever had. Priscilla and I played it all summer, and you couldn't think how many stories you can be when you have a castle of your own with a window where you can see a river and a city with towers. Long before we had finished imagining, and I still had a great deal of the knight-book to read, it was time to go back to the city.

The afternoon before we were to leave, I went up the twisty stairs for a last visit. Priscilla was still looking out of the window —she never seemed to get tired of it. But I took her down gently.

"You must come too," I told her, "I promised Aunt Adela you would, and anyway

the castle would be cold in winter. But next summer we will both come back," I added, for I could see a shadow fall on her face.

There was a lump in my throat that was not quite a pleasant one, but it had to be done, so we went around and said good-bye to everything, and last of all to the three little trunks where the nails spelled "P. W." on the covers. Priscilla felt worst about leaving those, but my worst feeling was when I closed the window for the last time. The sun looked very misty, and I don't think it was all the dust on the window panes.

After tea I took Priscilla to Aunt Adela. "Thank you for lending her to me," I said. "She's been very comforting."

"What on earth——" said Aunt Adela.

"Well, you see," I said, trying to explain, "we're interested in the same things, and it's very pleasant to have someone interested in the same things you are."

But Aunt Adela only stared; then she said, "Child, dreaming has gone to your head. It's lucky school begins Monday."

So I knew she was too grown up to understand. Poor Aunt Adela! But Priscilla and I understood.

The next day we left for the city. Just before we reached the turnpike, there was a bend in the road where you saw the house for the last time. I was in the back seat of the carriage so that I could look at it till the last minute. We turned into the bend, and just then the sun, which had been under a cloud, flashed out all of a sudden, and there was my little window! All the panes were gold and blue like jewels. For a minute they shone and sparkled and twinkled at me. Then the road dipped down and the wall of trees shut my castle from my sight.

The girl's voice died away, and the two stood looking in silence out of the little window across the reservoir and the Park, their shoulders close together. Finally the boy spoke.

"Whether it's towered Camelot or the blue plain of the sea, always it is far away, 'over

the hills and far away!' It seems but a step when we are children, but we never get to it."

"But we *have* got to it," she urged, "we have run back to it just now, in memory."

"No, we have run back into sight of it again, that is all."

"Oh, Boy," said she, "now you are talking sad, grown up talk. You mustn't."

"But I must," he answered. "It is good to dream as a child again, to feel the clouds of glory trail. But it is unspeakably sad, too, for what has become of those dreams? Why have we not found them? How can we find them now? What others can we find to answer in their places?"

"Have you found no other lady beyond the hill?" she queried.

"Have you seen Sir Launcelot ride by?" he answered.

Again there was silence. He looked at the girl so close beside him, at her sober, dreaming, wistful face. To find another lady beyond the hill—to be her Sir Launcelot!

"I wonder!" he half whispered.

The girl moved hastily away from the casement. "I must be going now," she said. But she cast a farewell look behind. "Dear, dear casement!" were her parting words.

CHAPTER III

CHILD PHILIP AS ESSAYIST

PHILIP was quite sure that he had belated spring fever. Spring fever in him did not manifest itself alone by a great longing to escape from New York: for that longing he knew most of the time. Nor did it manifest itself in a mighty desire to go swimming: for that he had most of the time also. He once defined winter as a long wait in a tank for Coney Island to open. In him spring fever manifested itself in an irresistible impulse to write causeries. Was it not Sainte-Beuve who defined a causerie as an open letter to all whom it may concern? Philip, however, had a better definition. According to him, a causerie is "the sort of stuff no editor will print." Therefore, an irresistible impulse to write causeries is, in a struggling young author of to-day, nothing more nor less than

an outbreak of idealism. (Or, do you say, foolishness? It is much the same!) But, finding himself suddenly seized with the impulse, Philip simply said, "Spring fever."

He made no effort to resist the impulse. The charm of writing a causerie is much like the charm of reading one; it resides in the unpremeditation, the impulsiveness, the compulsion to chat. To chat! How little time or place is there for chat in our modern magazines, where there is so much chatter! Chat is the intimate revelation, in kindly intercourse, of one man's soul and opinions. One only chats when life is going slowly by, and never with a muck rake in one's hand. One chats, thought Philip, when one has spring fever.

But, after all, there is an art behind the printed chat—or should be. An author's causeries, like a woman's impulses, are always the result of careful consideration. Philip knew this, who had so often read aloud, to himself, the Essays of Elia, almost ready to cry with mingled delight, envy and despair at

their subtly cadenced periods. So, as he loafed about the city that day after Child Marie and he had wandered back into childhood by the wistful way of memory, with what he called spring fever urging him to go home and bubble over upon paper deliciously melancholy reflections that nobody would print, he kept trying to steer these reflections toward a definite point. The only trouble was, he kept forgetting the point.

Finally, he ate a solitary dinner at his "club"—his "club" being a certain ancient hotel down where the Avenue begins, where the coffee is French and fragrant, and the magazines, in black leather bindings, French and spicy. Then he went home to his rooms, high above the Square where the cross gleams by night, and by day sunny, red-brick, beautiful houses look down in aristocratic benignity on the little children of the poor, and the window panes are growing purple.

First he locked his door. Then he took off his coat and rolled up his sleeves. Then he put a half completed manuscript of a very

marketable story with a very happy ending, deep into a drawer. Then he filled six pipes, lit one of them, and laid the rest, with a box of matches, in a row on his desk. Next he placed a pile of clean copy paper in front of him, and sat down to write.

As a preliminary he made a figure " 1 " in the corner of the top sheet. Then he wondered why Marie looked so tired and wistful, and drew a pen sketch of an elephant, one of the few animals he could delineate successfully, as he considered the problem. Then he got up and crossed to the piano, playing a few bars of the andante of Mozart's second sonata. Philip was sadly deficient in technique, but he had imagination. The music, in that odd way music has, contrived to put him into the necessary mood. He went back to his desk, picked up his pen, and wrote steadily. Evidently the words came freely. There was no interruption to the scratch, scratch of his pen, save when he paused to light a fresh pipe. Finally, as the early milk wagons were rattling through the Square, he

tipped back in his chair and began without rising to undress. The first sheet of his manuscript bore the heading,

How to be Happy though in New York.

LEST, in the flattering event of some reader's pushing his way middistance into this discourse, the cry should be raised as if in triumph of discovery, "That is, after all, the trouble with him!" I will state at the outset that I am a bachelor, and by preference—whose preference I need not be expected to disclose. Let a man affirm that he is lonely, discontented, at odds of the spirit with his environment, and the first remark his friends address to him in consolation—especially if they be themselves single—is, "You ought to get married." Flying in the face of daily example and historical record, they affirm, as it were, that marriage is a sure dispeller of discontent, a panacea for loneliness and the thousand miserable moods of sadness the isolated human spirit knows.

Now, nothing is plainer, of course, than

the fact that discontent, even if it vanish like the morning mists at the daybreak of matrimony, too often settles down again in a good, steady drizzle before noon; that no loneliness in this lonely world can equal the void which separates some husbands from some wives; and that a spiritual moodiness existing before the nuptial day is not to be driven out of a man's system by the shock of wedding bells. Schopenhauer married would have been the same philosopher as Schopenhauer single, or more so. Not willing to concede, then, that my moods result inevitably, or even probably, from the fact that I live in a state of "single cussedness," I once more affirm boldly and deny that the affirmation should count against me, that I am a bachelor!

I am perfectly ready to admit you that matrimony might elevate me, or any other man, into a sphere of such serene harmony and peace that the vexations of mortal environment would be as naught, that New York itself, in fact, would sink so far below the window of our flat as to tell to our en-

raptured eyes (should we care to raise the shade) but as a dirty smudge on the green shoulder of the world. Though I have had little experience in matrimony, it may be admitted without dispute that I have had quite my share of experience in those delectable skirmishes which precede it, and if I have never been mortally—I mean matrimonially —wounded, I have more than once been sorely hit. Perhaps, for all you know, Gentle Reader, I have even looked into the Promised Land, perhaps I buried my hopes one bitter midnight in the Vale of Moab, where weeping cupids turned the sod and no man saw, perhaps I too know the green felicity and the never-to-be-forgotten sweet promise of fruitfulness which that land affords. But I only admit this felicity might be. And I do most earnestly protest against the illogical assumption that because it sometimes is, the converse proposition is true, namely, that unhappiness and discontent are the result of being single. Because a man drinks whiskey and becomes jovial, it does not follow that

your sober and melancholy fellow is melancholy because he is sober.

Therefore, once and for all, let us have done with this conventional, ill-considered, rather tiresome advice (usually accompanied with a disgusting slap on the shoulder), this hollowly hearty, "Get married, old chap!" and, confessing fairly that the question of matrimony is at best but a side issue, face the great problem, How to be happy though in New York.

One of the jolliest of book plates is that designed for the author of the "London Lyrics," by Kate Greenaway. She was his later, as George Cruikshank had been his earlier illustrator; but nothing she did for the text was quite so delightful as the book plate, with "Fear God, fear naught" above, and "Frederick Locker" below, and between, those inimitable two young people sitting beneath a Kate Greenaway tree laden with fruit and the Locker arms, while far away across sunny fields rises the distant panorama of London, crowned with St. Paul's dome.

It all seems quite natural, even to the solemn owl perched on a bit of fence beneath the tree. No doubt just such kiddies do exist within sight of London Town, and no doubt they sit beneath just such a tree, tired of reading, but not at all drawn to pluck the tempting fruit, as round and red as their dear cheeks. No doubt they exist within London Town itself, and surely Mr. Barrie knows where to find them. But the other day I tried the fanciful experiment of copying them faithfully out, minute line for line, with pencil and water colors, kiddies and apples and owl and funny tree, all save the distant panorama of London across the sunny fields. In place of that, I drew in the sky line of New York as it looked the morning I began to work. They had three new sky-scrapers up before I finished.

The result was unutterably melancholy.

The kiddies, who had seemed their jovial selves before I added this last touch, were suddenly converted into an infant Adam and Eve, who had eaten of the fruit of the Tree

of Knowledge, which grew above them. The owl seemed very like our old friend Satan, in feathered guise, and the sunlight had faded from the intervening spaces. It was a curious phenomenon, and I puzzled long over the picture to see if I could detect any flaw in the copying. No, the copy was faithful: and when I washed out the sky line of New York and substituted that of London, as in the original drawing, rising in a long, low pyramid to the central dome, the picture lost its grotesqueness, becoming once more sunny, charming, natural. The fruit was once more sweet.

This chance experiment led me to pry more minutely into the moods and atmosphere of New York City, the Titan of the Western world, that squats clumsily on the too small space of Manhattan Island and watches the myriad ships come up the Bay. Surely, thought I, a town that cannot harbor two of Kate Greenaway's darling brood, even in its suburbs, cannot give soil to a Kate Greenaway tree, must have something the matter

with it. Through this curious by-way was I led consciously up to the great problem, How to be happy though in New York.

That the problem is a great one, a cloud of witnesses at once attest, none other than the theaters, music halls, vaudeville houses, glittering restaurants, and all the patrons of these places. Attempting to keep New York happy is, indeed, an industry that owns millions of real estate, employs thousands of men and women, and makes the fortunes of a few. (I wonder if that makes *them* happy?) Even our cafés may be divided into two classes, the places to eat in and the places to spend money in. Those of the second class belong solely to this amusement industry, quite separate from the industry of keeping New York fed; to be sure, they call on the food (and drink) industry for material assistance and a thinly veiled excuse; but the glittering restaurant really exists to cater not to the desire for food, but to the love of excitement, of amusement; not to the hungry but to the bored.

Ah, is it not just this, just boredom, just loneliness, that drives to such cafés so many of the young and once pure in heart, there to find in the "lobster palaces," as we call them, if not happiness, at least company and luxury and freedom from the awful face of Want? Could virtue glitter so, be so gay, smell so savory, would evil have to lurk behind those penciled eyes? God's arch foe is not Lucifer but Loneliness.

Primarily, at any rate, the glittering restaurant has as little to do with feeding people as the theater with educating them. A hungry man has as little place in one of these cafés as an intelligent man at a musical comedy. Broadway, then, upper Broadway, from the gusty Flatiron to the thirsty Circle, blazing with lights like no other place on earth, alive with cabs and motors and actors out of a job, and women with diamonds and dirty nails; lined with restaurants and theaters—shouts with its myriad voices the mighty desire to be amused, the mighty effort to satisfy this desire. The roll of carriages, the

popping of corks, the flash of a stocking, the crash of rag time, the outpouring of a tenor's "golden voice" at $2,500 per hour, the assimilation of lobster, the plays of Shakespeare (sometimes) and Clyde Fitch, the old drama of the moth and the flame, when the moth is often young and a man, and the flame brilliant with a peroxide radiance—all this is but a part, but the Rialto's answer to the great problem, How to be happy though in New York.

However, I am not going into a moral bluster, picking up my intellectual skirts with the mental daintiness of a Harvard English professor, at mention of these thousands who approach the problem through the Great White Way. The goodly proportion of them who are not compelled by circumstances to be found in New York of an evening, but who remain here of their own volition, deserve no better fate; it were time worse than wasted to flash ideals before their eyes. And on the remainder I can look with a certain comfortable pity, a pity such as one feels for suffering in a play. Are they not compelled,

like me, to pass their lives in New York, poor things? Consequently they have no homes (a home is impossible south of Yonkers), no neighbors, no ties of locality and communal spirit; they are not quite real; I am sure their souls are like their complexions. And they have nothing real to do.

Nothing to do! That is the trouble with our stage to-day, with our great city where the destiny of our stage is shaped, with our civilization. When people have nothing to do, they will do anything—they will even go to a Cohan comedy! They must kill time at any price. Thus bad art flourishes as the price, lax standards prevail, and a glaring mediocrity marks our stage, and our visible civilization. Art, indeed, varies directly in quality with the number of other interests in life, and civilization with the proportion of neighborliness. Because I, too, am cooped up without neighborly interests and a home, in this city of sky-scrapers, subways and ennui, and know the nothing-to-do unrest which gets into the blood like sunflower sap, facing a

man squarely to a blazing amusement sign, I pity these patrons of the Rialto. But it is a comfortable pity, for the very simple reason that I am a philosopher in my way. What can I do about it? (A philosopher, you will observe, is a man who can explain anything but get excited about nothing).

That isn't the whole reason, either; no philosophical reason ever is. I know it isn't, because my pity is stirred by another feature of life in this city which I am quite as powerless to remedy; but God knows this pity is not comfortable! Perhaps you, too, have been moved to the same emotion by the same cause; but I doubt it. The Rialto and its peculiar life and atmosphere are known to every one; some even call it New York. It is very far from that. Go with me to the Bowery any night at six o'clock, and stand on a corner near Spring Street for fifteen minutes, and I will prove to you that there is a city within the city, such as you never dreamed. The rush at Brooklyn Bridge, the stream of humanity uptown at night, is as nothing to this

spectacle of mine. Yet no "Seeing New York" coaches ever make it a point of their pilgrimage; no New Yorkers ever show it to their visitors as one of the sights of the town; unnoticed as the sun-rising and the inevitable march of night, daily this spectacle is spread for eyes to see; the most significant, the most tremendous, the most unutterably melancholy spectacle the teeming town affords.

To the west lie the sweat-shops, lining Broadway in deep blocks a dozen stories high, flanking every side street between Grace Church and the old Canal. To the east, between the Bowery and the river, lies the great tenement city, life and death clashing in its attics, love and horror buried in its cellars, the most thickly populated section of the globe, the abiding place of a hundred tribes and races. At six o'clock the factories disgorge the mass of toilers, men and women, girls and boys, little children, which they swallowed up in the morning and extracted vitality from all day.

And this disgorged mass of humanity, this

army of slaves to the passion for underwear, with one accord and a sound as of many waters troubled, turns eastward toward the tenement city. At every cross street the multitudes burst into the Bowery like a flood let loose. They cross the broad thoroughfare in black swarms, blocking travel, split into irregular sections by passing cars, crawling like great snakes under the straddling spans of the elevated road. And then the vanguard is swallowed up in the hiving tenement town beyond. But there seems no end to the streams. Out of the west they come, and cross, and vanish into that wofully tiny section of the free earth's crust, and more follow, and more, and more. How does that teeming, sweating hive hold them all? Will they never stop pouring into it? Look up as far as an eye can see, down as far the other way, the Bowery is black with the swarming army, the great daily migration—homeward.

Home! What chance for homes where they abide? What place for a family where there are so many children? What oppor-

tunity of neighborliness where there are so many neighbors? What hope for art where there is so much ignorance, for civilization where there is so little soap? Yet hear them; they are chattering in half a hundred tongues, singing in quite as many keys, laughing, shouting. They, too, must try to be happy; theirs, too, is the great quest! At night they will be on the streets, at their poor theaters, in their dance halls and cafés; you may see them searching, searching for something to do, for their birthright to be happy. But many of them you will not see, though they also are searching. It is better that you should not. Some of these invisible ones are girls, young girls. That lithe, trim figure of a maid who crossed the Bowery with head held high at six o'clock is of their number. It is better you should go home now, as I do, and shut yourself in from the pity, the horror of it all. You, too, must be happy, even in New York; it is your birthright.

* * * * * *

Here, high above the Square, *my* Square,

the door locked, books comfortably looking down at me from their tall cases, the Rialto and the Bowery alike slip out of memory, and I become interested in myself.

To become interested in one's self is not easy. Most people fancy it is; but that is because they have never tried it. To be interested in yourself, you must have two selves. Most people have only one. That is why they are called selfish. The self I am interested in reads many books, and I watch him like a critic and kindly librarian.

Sometimes, to be sure, he wanders about town, made very happy by the stray wonder-bits of beauty that he finds in this city we are in the habit of calling ugly. To stand in Gramercy Park of an evening and, looking north, first at the cosy red-brick houses and the trees, slowly to lift his eyes above them to see the monstrous, pale bulk of the new tower booming up against the stars, is to him an indescribable delight. So, on a misty day, is the Flatiron Building towing Broadway northward, like some great liner of the

land; and upper Broadway by night when driving steam plumes go by the Times tower like clouds cutting off a mountain summit; and sunset down a side street; and Japanese twilights when across the open spaces the great slab walls of the sky-scrapers are but a deeper shade of the sky, picked out with golden lights. A thousand vistas of beauty pierce their way out of the sordidness of our city, for the seeing eye. What right have we to call New York ugly? We never look at it!

Never-the-less, the other chap called Me always comes home at last for final satisfaction in his books. Always some grain of ugly dust blows up the pleasant vista. Always the sunset fades, the Japanese twilight deepens into gloom. But books remain, eternal comforters.

I once went away from New York into the country, and sat at night on a New England hillside, alone with my God, my pipe and the whippoorwills. In the thicket below me, on the height above, far out through the dark

valley, rose the long, clear, half sad, half cheerful whistle of the nightingales of the North.

"Why must silly men be forever writing 'nature books'?" I said to myself. "What do I care what a whippoorwill looks like, or when he builds his nest, or where? Why should anybody care? It were quite as well if the whippoorwill had no body at all, so long as his whistle lived! That is the important thing, the only thing that matters, for it is the soul of the bird and his environment, the common sense and not very poignant melancholy of the New England summer night. And who needs a nature book to tell him what this whistle sounds like, still less to read its meaning?"

Then I looked out over the dark, still world, that swung visibly eastward under the patient stars. My soul was taken up into immensity. "D——n all books!" I added, aloud.

That, of course, is the healthy view—outside of New York. But in New York books

are, after all, essential for salvation, which is why perhaps they are so little read here. If there be any to whom the Rialto is vain and the East Side intolerable; for whom the great nervous streets of this city are as imprisoning cañons, for all their vistas here and there into Beauty; with whom there ever walks the haunting ghost of fairer ways and days, of lost youth and a forgotten, sweet power of imaginative life, to them I speak, and to them only. If any others have followed me this far, I am very sorry, but I must ask them to turn back. I am going to shut the door of my castle—my library—and talk soberly with the chosen few.

I shall not be long, my friends (for I may call you friends, though you are to me but shadows?). Truly sober talks are never long. A few words, the bold outline sketch of a mood, and all is accomplished. The mind of the auditor leaps forth to clothe and color the skeleton, and the two, speaker and listener, sit silent before the finished work.

It is a House of Life we would create to

be happy; in our imaginations, since we cannot buy such in the New York real estate market. (That we cannot buy *any* houses in the real estate market does not alter the case!) But each of us must be his own Rossetti, for each desires something other than the rest in the adornment of the façade, the arch of the windows, the furnishing of the rooms, the height of the chamber. Don't build with too much fiction. Truth is often a stranger to fiction. There is more solidity of foundation in the mastery of an intellectual idea; hence more pleasure in contemplating the completed edifice. Read a great work of science at least once every six months; it will take you two months to do it. James's "Varieties of Religious Experience" is good. So are Martineau's sermons, and with them you build solid and carve sweet, solemn images over the door as well. Adorn your walls with the wonderful water color gems of the Elizabethan lyric poets, to sing to you as you pass from room to room; and in the spacious dining-room, where you go to grow,

let Shelley or Isaiah or Shakespeare or Carducci paint you a fresco, as you choose. It were well, too, to have Heine's sardonic smile on the landing, to keep fermenting deep in your nature a due sense of humor.

And upstairs the world is yours, whatever sweet dreams you desire, and for company your own fancy, kept alive by the daily touch with genius; your own fancy peopling your rooms with faces wished for, with faces loved and lost, spreading without your windows golden stretches of that magic land beyond the sunset, which, as you grow older, you will learn, if your childhood was happy, is none other than the dear countryside where you grew up, and learned to love a maid, and speak the name of Home.

* * * * *

Thus I talk to them—these chosen, shadow friends—and they rise silently and depart. And my own words come back in a surge over my heart, echoing like the sea as it mounts the shore. That land beyond the sunset, which is none other than the dear countryside where

you grew up—and learned to love a maid—and speak the name—of Home. It is late, too late, to read; I will go to bed. Ah! Why do I hesitate, draw back? The pillow lies white and inviting. The single pillow . . . and learned to love a maid—and speak the name of Home!

Yes, Dear Reader, you who cried out impulsively when I began, "That is, after all, the trouble with him!" and were rebuked (perhaps) when I so completely and overwhelmingly refuted you, it is your turn now again!

CHAPTER IV

A BUGLER BEFORE THE WALL

A DAY or two later Philip came upon Marie on the lower slopes of Mount Mozart, laying down the law to a nurse maid. She was so occupied with her missionary task that she did not notice his approach.

"Don't you know any better than that?" she was saying to the awed nurse maid. "You're not fit to have charge of a baby! The idea of letting the poor little thing sleep with the blazing sun full on its eyes! Don't you know that might injure the child's eyes permanently? Now remember, when you have it out doors in the future, either pull the shade of the carriage down to protect it, or face it away from the sun."

"Yiss, Mum," said the astonished nurse maid, beginning to wheel her charge away.

"You suggest Nehemiah, the prophet," said Philip, with a laugh.

"I fail to get the connection of ideas," Marie answered. She was still possessed of her indignation, and in no mood for laughter. She seemed, indeed, rather far away from him, and he felt an unreasoned rage against the infant.

"Maybe there isn't much," said he. "Only old Nehemiah set all the Jews to rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem, each over against his own house, didn't he? It's merely a case of reforming the world by reforming what lies nearest each man's hand. It always struck me as a pretty good way."

"Well, it makes me mad," said Marie, "to see poor little helpless babies put in charge of ignorant nurse maids, and made to suffer for it all their lives. Someday that child, perhaps, will have trouble with his eyes; he will get headaches in school, and be apparently dull and irritable, and be considered a bad child; and maybe he will get punished unjustly, which will sour his temper for life.

And what will really be the matter is nothing in the world but a nurse maid's carelessness."

"We are serious to-day," said Philip.

"We have to be serious once in a while," said the girl, laughing, and trying to shake off her mood, which, in truth, gave her a suggestion of executive self-reliance that was rather disconcerting to the man. Perhaps it is always a little disconcerting to a man to find executive self-reliance in a woman, but certainly so when he is bent on playing a game of sentiment.

They strolled rather gravely through the Run-away Place, talking of common things, till they were confronted by a baby with a bugle. The baby, which was a boy baby about half past four, faced them on the path, raised his bugle to his lips, and blew a mighty blast—at least, a mighty quantity of breath was expended, though the resultant sound was somewhat disproportionate, and hardly set the wild echoes flying.

"What wouldst thou, Childe Roland?" inquired Philip.

Childe Roland appeared a trifle nonplussed at this answer to his summons, and fled precipitately down the path to his mother. Philip watched him, smiling.

"How like the rest of us," he said. "We march up to the Great Unknown, and blow a great blast of defiance—and then we run away. And usually the Great Unknown is quite harmless, like you and me, even kindly disposed, in fact."

"Do you really *want* to be a philosopher?" asked Marie.

"*Want* to be? I can't help being," he replied, grandiloquently.

The deep down twinkle of a secret purpose, a twinkle he was beginning to know, gathered in Marie's eyes.

"Have you a pencil, and some paper, and a watch?" she asked.

He fished in his pockets. "All of them," he answered.

"Then sit down on this bench, and do just as I tell you. We will now conduct an investigation in pure science. The proper study of

mankind is children. We will observe Childe Roland for half an hour."

Philip looked puzzled. "The proper study of mankind is womankind—or woman unkind," he said. "I don't want to study Childe Roland for half an hour. Besides, maybe he won't stay here half an hour."

"Then we will follow him," she answered. "You do as I say. However, we will make it fifteen minutes."

The command was peremptory.

"Yes, marm," he said meekly. "But please stop Willie Smith kicking me under the desk."

"Willie," said Marie, turning on the seat, "stop kicking Philip. I don't want to speak to you again!"

"You sound quite professional," said Philip.

Marie smiled to herself. "Now behave, and do as I tell you," she said. "What time is it?"

He told her.

"Good," she replied. "We will begin in

three minutes, exactly on the hour. Have your paper ready. We will watch Childe Roland carefully, and you will put down everything he does, particularly everything that involves muscular movement."

"Will I?" said Philip. "Won't I get neuritis? Childe Roland seems to me preternaturally lacking in repose. And why will I?"

"First, you will because you are nice, and don't want me to get neuritis," said Marie. "And second, you will because you want to be scientific."

"But it doesn't sound scientific, it sounds silly."

"A great many scientific things sound silly to the unlearned," said Marie, grandly. "Now begin. See, Roland has blown his bugle again. Put that down quick."

So Philip put down at the top of a sheet of paper, "Blew bugle," and turned to watch the little boy.

Have you ever watched a child at play for fifteen minutes, and tried to set down on paper

everything he did, every motion that he made? To take down a verbatim report of one of Bishop Brooks' addresses must have been very much such a feat. Philip grew interested. He watched and wrote, and wrote and watched, chuckling to himself every now and then. Childe Roland continued at his "motor activities," quite unconscious of being an experiment. But Childe Roland's mother kept a suspicious eye on the pair of watchers.

When the fifteen minutes had expired, Marie said, "Now read what you have written."

And this is what Philip read:

FIFTEEN MINUTES WITH A BABY DYNAMO, OR, WHY I AM NOT A PARENT

Blew bugle
Sat down
Got up
Ate a peanut
Found a newspaper
Brought paper to mother
Asked mother to read paper
Didn't listen
Ran to near-by tree

Ran back again
Sounded on the bugle horn
Ate another peanut
Ran to mother
Ran away again
Tripped over stick and dropped bugle horn
Cried
Was picked up and kissed
Stopped crying
Picked up a stick
Dug with stick
Dirt flew in mother's face
Was slapped
Cried again
Stepped on bugle horn
Picked it up
Tried to sound upon it
No sound
Tried again, puffing out cheeks with effort
No result, and cried again
Brought bugle to mother
Was lectured
Threw bugle horn on ground
Saw a squirrel
Chased squirrel up a tree
Saw little boy
Hugged little boy
Ran to mother

Got a piece of chalk and drew picture of a girl on the concrete walk. [Sir Caspar Purdon Clark,

director of the Museum of Art, passing by, saw it, and exclaimed, "Ah, a sketch by Glackens! Shocking, shocking!"]

Threw chalk away
Waved arms up and down
Ran to mother
Stepped on her toe
Was slapped
Cried again
Saw a squirrel
Held out peanut to squirrel
Squirrel came for nut
Clapped hands for joy, and ran to tell mother
Mother's interest perfunctory
Ran down path
Was called back
Asked, "Why?"
Kicked bugle horn
Sat down
Stood up
Jumped
Chased a squirrel
Came back to mother
Asked mother for something
Mother gave him tin soldier
Played with tin soldier
Dropped tin soldier
Mother picked it up
Took it again
Broke head off tin soldier

Cried
Sat down
Stood up
Fell down

Fell on chalk, and drew another portrait figure (Everett Shinn, this time)

Stood up
Ran around
Sat down
Picked up bugle horn
Tried to sound it
No sound
Cried again
Still crying—time up

"It seems too bad to give this interesting story an unhappy ending," said Philip, "but Truth—we must have Truth, you know! Now, if you don't mind, will you tell me the Why?"

"Just a little investigation of the motor activities of children, for my personal satisfaction," answered Marie. "I've been wondering if the schools for the little tots do all they ought to do for the best interests of the tots, all they might do, in fact."

"I've always said, myself," remarked

Philip, sagely, "that education is getting too full of frills and Froebelows."

Marie ignored this frivolity.

"How many things did Childe Roland do with his body in fifteen minutes?" she asked, leaning over the sheet of paper.

Philip counted them.

"Somewhere round seventy, that I've got down," he answered. "I won't swear that I didn't miss any. In fact, I guess I missed most of the variations. I had time only for the themes."

"You see what the problem is?" Marie went on. "Does the school provide any adequate opportunity for the muscular development of the child who comes to it at four, five or six years of age? Does it give opportunity for the physical exercise upon which the development of the brain so largely depends? Up to seven years, a child sleeps twelve hours out of the twenty-four. What he does in the other twelve, if left to himself, that is, to Nature, Childe Roland has answered in two words—he plays.

"Two words is good!" said Philip, holding out the paper.

"The waking life of a natural child is simply and solely a play life," Marie went on, intent upon her subject. "And it is so for reasons that have their foundations deep in biology and racial development——"

"I once read Baldwin!" Philip interjected. "It all comes back to me now!"

The girl was hurt. "Very well," she said, "I won't go on, if you don't wish it. I thought you wanted me to explain why we watched the baby. Excuse me. We will talk about something more interesting."

Philip grew penitent instantly. "Forgive me," he cried. "But I couldn't help it—those phrases—'biology'—'racial development'—they bring back the wise head of Professor Royce, wagging behind the desk, and poor little me wildly trying to understand and going down for the third time in the deep sea of psychology. Please go on. I *do* want to know. Perhaps I can understand with you as professor."

"Well," said Marie, not entirely mollified, "the child plays, and if left to himself he plays at those things which will tend to his best development. That is his instinct. It is foolish to suppose that only animals have instincts. He plays at those things which have made for biological fitness since the dawning of the race. And those activities of his are mostly concerned with the movements of the large muscle groups, and they are constant in nothing but change. And this activity is expressive of the child and indicative of his needs because he instinctively does the things his body demands."

"Just as a kitten chases a spool," said Philip.

"Exactly," said Marie. "Now, the point is here, and you would see it plainer if you had made a fifteen minute observation of a child in a kindergarten or a lower primary school—isn't the little child in school, under present conditions, subjected to artificial muscular restriction for a quarter, at least, of his waking time, and through this restriction is he

not doomed, perhaps, to a lesser brain development?"

"Sure he is!" cried Philip. "Now I know what's the matter with me!"

Then he hastened to add, more seriously, "But you can't have Run-away Places all over big towns, and you can't always have parents who know how to teach. Some of 'em who could aren't willing to. You've got to have schools."

"Yes," said Marie, "you've got to have schools of course. But sooner or later you've got to realize that the schools must be divided into smaller classes, that they must give greater opportunity for large physical work and play. Every school ought to have a garden. A kindergarten is not a garden at all when it's forty small, active baby dynamos cooped up in one tiny room, with a tired teacher trying to hold the lid down."

"'A tired teacher trying to hold the lid down,'" said Philip. "So that's the matter with you?"

"Who said there was anything the matter

with me?" she inquired. "Why will you reduce everything to personalities?"

"The singular noun, please," said Philip.

"It is usually supposed to be a woman who reduces everything to personalities," said she.

"It usually is," he answered.

"*I* don't," said Marie.

Philip smiled broadly.

"Thus proving it?" he inquired.

"I knew you would say that," she retorted.

"But not quite soon enough!" said he. "Alas! you will be admitted to Plato's Ideal Republic, though; and I sha'n't."

"Why?" she asked.

"Because you are a teacher, or a scientist, or something wise like that. And I'm only a poet. Plato, you remember, sadly but firmly kicked the poets out."

"I thought you were a philosopher," said Marie.

"That was half an hour ago," he answered. "I have decided since to be a poet."

"Poets are well enough in their way," she remarked.

"But not in anybody else's way?" he asked.

"That depends——" she began.

"On what?" said he. "On the poetry?"

"No," she replied, "on the poet."

"Oh," said Philip. "And will you give specifications of desirability?"

"A certain impersonality in poets is desirable," she answered. "Or shall I say, a certain childishness?"

"But I don't agree with you at all," said he. "The essence of poetry is its personality. The more personal, the better the poetry."

"Nonsense," Marie replied. "Look out now over the Run-away Place. See that sweep of green lawn, and the moving carriages, and the splashes of gold sunlight, and far off, between the trees, that pile of buildings like a single great castle guarding its huge estate. If you wrote a lyric about it, there would be nothing personal in your poem."

"If I wrote a lyric about it," he answered,

" there would be nothing that wasn't personal in my poem."

The girl started to reply; but she met his glance, and grew uneasily silent.

" No, not a thing," he went on. " It is a gay and colorful scene, I admit—just now. But why is it a gay and colorful scene? Tell me that."

" Because the Lord and Frederick Law Olmsted made it such," she replied.

Philip smiled. " I am willing to credit Olmsted with Central Park," he said, " but I can hardly bring myself to blame the Lord for Senator Clark's mansion or the Plaza Hotel; though, as the French say, the Lord must be modest, since He made man in His image. No, your answer is wrong. Try again."

" It is the only answer I have," she replied, stolidly.

" Well," said he, " it is a gay and colorful scene, an appropriate frame for a lyric, because you are you and I am I and we are here together. Isn't that the answer? "

"Don't you suppose it is a gay and colorful scene for that man on the next bench?" she asked.

"Isn't that the answer?"

"It is the same scene for everybody who looks upon it. It would be the same scene if you were in Salem and I was in Siam," she remarked.

"Isn't that the answer?"

"Look!" she cried. "How rosy that drift of steam is from the castle roof. It looks like a plume, or a banner. That's it, a banner!"

"Isn't that the answer?"

"No!" said Marie.

"Isn't that the answer?"

"It—it might be, if you were only sensible," she admitted slowly.

"What is sensible?" he asked.

"Sensible is being ten years old, as you promised to be," she replied.

"But a little while ago you would have it that I grow up, and be scientific," he complained.

"That is quite different," said she. "I don't want you to grow up, and be silly."

"Marie," said he suddenly, "who are you?"

She shook her head.

"Come," he urged, "I am Childe Roland, blowing my bugle before the Great Unknown."

Still she shook her head.

"I find you this morning," he went on, "not in a Run-away Place mood at all. I find your other self, your out-there-south-of Fifty-ninth-Street self, in the ascendant. I don't know anything about that self, except that it appears to be powerful learned. I haven't any admission to that self. You peep out at me from the Dark Tower for a moment, and then pull up the draw-bridge in my face. You won't listen to my bugle call."

"But aren't you terrified at the Great Unknown?" she asked, glancing at him out of the side of her eyes.

"Not terrified, but baffled," he replied, "and grievously hurt."

"Hurt?" She unconsciously let a note of solicitude into her voice.

"Yes, hurt," he cried. "You don't play fair. When there's a bugler at your gates you should go out and see what he wants. That's in the rules."

"What—what does he want?" said Marie, in a low voice.

Philip leaned toward her on the bench. "He wants to come in," said he.

The girl's fingers were pulling at her handkerchief. "Without knowing what is inside?" she queried.

"He has seen a child on the battlements and a face at the door," said Philip.

"But the little child has come out to meet him," she said. "Is that not enough?"

"No," he answered, "that is not enough."

"Perhaps nobody but the child has heard the bugle," she said.

"But the face at the door?" he asked.

"That might have been an accident," she replied.

"Are all but the child deaf?" said Philip.

"Yes, that is it, they are all deaf," she answered, hastily.

"Then I shall blow again, and blow a mighty blast," said he.

"They are all *very* deaf," said Marie.

"I don't believe that," he retorted, trying to look into her face. "I will not believe that."

"You—you will have to," she replied.

"But the little girl—won't she tell them?" said he.

"She is a prisoner; they never listen to her," Marie answered. "And they only let her run out a little way now and then."

"Then she shall be freed," cried Philip, "if I have to blow the walls down!"

"You called me Nehemiah, so now you'll be Joshua?" she smiled.

"Any one you like," said he, with no trace of a smile on his face; "but the walls shall fall, and I shall enter the Great Unknown!"

The girl rose.

"That sounds like a threat," she said.

"That sounds like a defiance," he replied.

"Perhaps it is," said she. "And the little

girl—she will have to be kept under lock and key during a state of siege."

"Till when?" said Philip, anxiously.

"Till the siege is over," smiled Marie.

"For ever and ever, till to-morrow?" he asked.

"I said, till the siege is over," she replied.

"Can't there be a truce, just to give her fresh air?" said he.

Marie shook her head. "I said, till the siege is over," she reiterated. "Good bye."

She moved as if to go.

Philip stood irresolute. Finally he made a gesture as if flinging something away from him.

"I have thrown away the bugle horn," he announced.

"Then the little prisoner can come out again," replied Marie, smiling back at him.

She moved away, down the path.

Suddenly he called after her. "The bugle didn't smash!" he cried. But whether she heard or not he could not tell. She gave no sign.

CHAPTER V

THE OLD MEN WHO PLAYED CROQUET

THEY were sitting at a table by a window in the Casino. The window was opened. The warm spring breeze bore in to them the fragrance of young grass growing and the smell of gasolene. It is very probable that the latter odor was in the ascendant; but, as Child Marie pointed out, it is well to have a selective smeller. Occasionally, if one sniffed very eagerly and quickly between cars, one could detect the fragrance of young grass growing.

It was something of an adventure for Child Marie to be sitting in the Casino at all, but to be sitting brazenly at a window table, screened off from the rest of the room, with a member of the hostile sex, unchaperoned —well, that was, to put it mildly, an innovation. At least, that is what she told Philip,

and a certain hilarity in her spirits seemed to bear her statement out. Philip was nonchalantly smoking a cigarette and flicking the ash into his ice cream saucer.

"I hate cigarettes," he remarked casually.

"Then why do you smoke them?" she inquired.

"From a painful sense of duty," he replied. "When really grown up people are being wicked as we are now, the gentleman always smokes a cigarette, and flicks the ash nonchalantly into the dregs of his dessert. There must be a deep psychological connection between villainy and cigarettes. I wish I knew what it is."

"Couldn't a villain smoke a pipe?" asked Marie.

He looked at her scornfully. "I fear you do not attend the playhouse," he said. "He could no more do it than a fat man could be romantic."

Marie looked gayly out over the Run-away Place. It was very live that afternoon with birds and children and nurse maids and taxi-

cabs and limousines; an endless procession of motor vehicles purred by on the drive, two abreast, and others stood waiting under the trees while their occupants were in the Casino. Behind, in the room, was the buzz of talk, the clink of glasses; waiters hurried to and fro. The gay scene had something almost foreign about it, something Viennese. One listened for the heady rhythm of a Strauss waltz, to set the whole animated picture to appropriate music. Marie gave a sigh of satisfaction. "Life *is* very pleasant," she said.

"It must be," answered Philip, "so many people have complained that it is short."

Marie knit her brows. "I'm afraid that's clever," said she. "I hope, Boy, you won't be clever. Anybody can be clever. The really clever person is the one who isn't."

"Then you're not," he grinned. "Your remark reminds me of Carlyle, who wrote the gospel of silence in twenty volumes."

"They are silence for me," she smiled, and looked once more out on the gay Park, with

renewed satisfaction. "I feel as if we'd run away to Vienna," she said.

"So do I," he answered. "This scene reminds me so much of Vienna. Don't you adore Vienna?"

"I guess so," she replied, with the shade of a smile, "I was never there."

"Neither was I," said Philip.

Further reminiscences of travel were interrupted by the arrival of a motor party at the nearest table in the room behind, one might say a typical motor party. It consisted of four persons, a man and three women. Philip peeped through the curtains, and hastily computed their combined weight at 796 pounds, in which total the man's weight was not the most conspicuous item.

"We've heard for some hundreds of years," said he, "about the Fair Sex. I'm going to write an epoch making essay on the Fat Sex."

"With a sub-title, 'Schopenhauer in the Tenderloin'?" asked Marie.

"Not at all," he answered. "If the issue

only were so local! But it isn't—it is universal. Diana of the Crosswinds, down there on the Madison Square Garden tower, justifies the pun I once made about her. I said Saint Gaudens had imagined a vane thing——"

"Did you say that?" asked Marie.

"Yes, I did. And it's a good joke, too! A vain thing she is, indeed, for she is a feminine ideal. In all her divine nudity she catches the sunlight on her slender limbs, and the winds of heaven caress her for love of her loveliness, her springing grace and lithe, keen power. And down below, their eyes on the shop windows, her mortal sisters pass along in endless procession, trussed up on heels of dizzy height, encased in corsets, buried beneath hats of unimaginable ugliness with brims almost as wide as the ladies below, incapable of active exertion, fat, unlovely. And them we still call the Fair Sex! It is a sad comment on what our own sex must be."

"Hear, hear!" cried Child Marie. "What a gallant gentleman you are. I'm

glad I have to work so hard. I suppose you wouldn't look at me if I were fat?"

"Not if I could help it," he laughed.

Marie shook her head sadly. "You're right, though," she said leaning toward him and speaking low. "Did you see that two hundred pounds of loveliness in lavender sit down just now?"

"No, I only heard."

"Well, she sat down with the abrupt finality of the well corseted fat woman. It's always sadly funny. You know how it is with such a woman. Conversation ceases for the moment. She must concentrate on her task. She moves ponderously to the selected seat, faces away, assumes a put-your-trust-in-Grand-Rapids-and-let-her-go expression, and slumps. Being so well upholstered (the lady, not the chair) she feels no pain. Rather do that little grunt and the creak of—of something invisible, signify the strain of a sudden change in attitude, as when a heavily laden schooner comes about on the other tack. For an instant surprise at the sudden slump is written

on her face. Then she beams at the successful outcome and resumes the conversation."

Philip glanced again at the two hundred pounds of loveliness in lavender. It was now engaged in the pleasant occupation of consuming three chocolate éclairs and a high ball.

"Poor thing," he remarked, "she's had no lunch for an hour! I wonder what she'd do if she had to walk? Can you fancy her on the Crawford Bridle Path?"

"Can you fancy her outside of a city at all, except in a motor car?" said Marie, seriously. "She's an urban product. I think I want to go away from here."

Just then the man in the motor party spoke up loudly, smacking his lips first as he set down his glass.

"What's the use of going to the country," he said to his companions, "when you can sit right here and see the green grass and hear the birdies—and call a cab?"

"I think I want to go, too," said Philip.

But he went laughing.

As they stood for a moment on the steps, a

hansom trailed by. The driver, a lank, solemn, elderly gentleman with a plug hat, seeing them, signaled for a fare. They shook their heads, and he drove on, to be swallowed up in the stream of motor traffic, a two-wheeled anachronism.

"Poor thing," said Marie, "he looks a ghost out of the past, like a bicycle or a bustle."

"I wonder what becomes of the cabbies?" said Philip. "When the Elevated road was electrified all the engine drivers got jobs as motor men. But when the hack trade was taxicabbed the chauffeurs all seem to have come from a totally different sphere of life. Look at them as they go by. They are all young and natty and keen eyed, with little mustaches, and the air of lady killers."

"They are willing to kill anybody," Marie interjected.

"In fact," he continued, "they seem to belong almost to a different race of beings from the long-faced, funereal gentlemen, or the round-faced, rubicund, jolly-monkish gen-

tlemen, who used to cruise around Union Square in deep seagoing cabs, looking for temporarily disabled citizens to tow to the home haven for salvage money. The cabs and hansoms are fast disappearing, but you never see their drivers at the wheel of a taxi. What becomes of these picturesque adornments of our rapidly vanishing civilization?"

"I can't tell you," said Marie. "Perhaps they retire to their country estates."

They were wandering through the Park by now, and had come to a green lawn on a little plateau under the east wall, whereon were several elderly gentlemen silently and solemnly engaged in playing croquet. Marie and Philip paused to observe them. They were extremely serious over their pastime. One, a tall, thin gentleman, was evidently finishing some sort of a tournament match with a short, rubicund gentleman. This match was keenly watched by all the other old gentlemen who were not playing under the second set of arches.

As the tall, thin old gentleman nursed his

red ball through the home stretch and drove both red and blue out against the stake, the spectators moved in a solemn, silent phalanx up to him, and gravely shook him by the hand. Meanwhile the short, rubicund opponent, as if ashamed of his defeat, tucked his mallet under his arm and hastened with it toward a little house that stood near by, under the trees. He seemed to be muttering something to himself. The game was instantly begun again by other players.

Child Marie looked up and down the walk where she and Philip stood, in perplexity.

"Is it just us?" she asked. "See, nobody else is paying the slightest attention to them. Nobody else seems to *see* them at all!"

"I've been thinking the same thing," answered Philip, in an awed whisper. "That lawn isn't a play ground. Folks aren't allowed on it. Yet nobody is interfering with *them*. Nobody's stopped to look down on them from over the Avenue wall, either. I don't believe anybody does see them but you and me—and I'm not sure about you."

"I'm going to find out," she answered, and turned to a pleasant faced nurse maid who was passing.

"Do you know what game those old gentlemen are playing?" she asked.

The nurse maid looked in the direction her finger pointed, puzzled.

"I don't see no old men," she said. "Only somebody mowing the grass."

And she passed on, with a backward glance at the pair who were regarding each other in mute astonishment.

Presently they turned simultaneously toward the lawn. Yes, the old gentlemen were still at it, and the short, rubicund old gentleman had returned from the little house, minus his mallet, and now stood near one stake under a tree, looking on. In defiance of all Park regulations Marie and Philip straddled the low fence and walked across the soft turf till they stood directly behind him.

"Pardon us," said Philip.

The short, rubicund old gentleman evidently had not heard them approach. He

gave a start of surprise, almost as if he were pulling back on something.

"Whoa!" he said.

Then he turned around and touched his hat, which was an oddly old-fashioned stove pipe, shading green with age.

"Pardon me, Miss," he said, "and you, Sir. But folks so seldom address us here."

"Why is that?" they both asked.

"Well, it's this way—they don't see us."

"But how did we see you?" asked Philip. "We know the rest don't."

"Want an automobile?" inquired the rubicund old gentleman.

"I do not, I hate 'em," said Philip.

"So do I, especially the smell," said Marie. "But what has that to do with our question?"

"That's your answer," said the old gentleman, genially. He was not, they observed, such a very old gentleman; and neither were the others, still silently engaged in their croquet. There was something oddly old fashioned about them, which gave them their aspect from a distance of extreme antiquity.

"But," said Philip, "we don't understand you."

"Why," said the rubicund one, brushing his old hat on his sleeve, "it's simple enough. We're invisible in the Park to everybody who sports a benzine buggy, or wants to sport one. That's why you startled me so. I ain't been spoke to here before, since a year ago come next month. Waldorf Willie over there—he's the tall one that just licked me because I was up all night finishin' Royce's 'Philosophy of Loyalty,' and my eye was off—Willie's never been spoke to, and he's been playin' here goin' on three year come next July."

"I see," said Marie. "It's all quite plain now."

"But I don't see at all," said Philip. "It's not a bit plain."

"Boy," she whispered, "the hat—the 'Whoa'—his gesture—Waldorf Willie—don't you see? *They are the cabbies!*"

Philip drew in a long breath. "Gee, I believe you're right!" he exclaimed. "That's

why you have to hate motor cars to see them."

"Of course."

"But the Park authorities, how do they come to let you play on this lawn?" asked Philip.

The old cabbie laughed. "They don't know," he answered. "They all want bubbles too. Even the guy over there runnin' the horse mower, he wants an auto mower. We pull up the arches when we see him comin', and put 'em down again when he's past."

"Couldn't he mow right through them?" inquired Marie.

"Certainly not!" exclaimed the cabbie. "They are *real* arches."

"But why do you play croquet?" said Philip.

"Why shouldn't we play croquet?" said the cabbie.

As there seemed to be no conclusive answer to this, Philip watched the games for a bit in silence.

"It's an odd way you play, anyhow," he said presently.

"We appointed a rules committee two years ago," said the cabbie, "to eliminate the brutality from the game."

"The *what?*" exclaimed the children.

"The brutality," answered the elderly gentleman. "We no longer use flamingoes."

"Have you eliminated the Queen of Hearts, too?" asked Marie.

"Mercy," said the cabbie, "*she* eliminated herself! She bought an eighty horse power, bright red tourin' car some while ago, and was smashed up speedin'. Hadn't you heard?"

Philip passed his hand over his brow. "No," he said. "It didn't get into the papers, I guess."

"Funny," remarked the cabbie. "I don't s'pose you saw Waldorf Willie's poem the other day, either, did you?"

They shook their heads.

"It was called 'An Ode on a Distant Prospect of a Hansom Cab.' It was written en-

tirely in taximeter; really quite clever. I wish I had a copy to show you."

"How odd," said Marie.

"What's odd?" asked the old cabbie, with some asperity.

"Why—why—a cabbie's knowing Gray's poems, and writing odes," said Marie.

"Not at all, not at all," the other replied. "I suppose you've heard of Francis Thompson? Well, *he* drove a cab, didn't he?"

As he undoubtedly did drive a cab, and as the old gentleman was plainly rather touchy on the point, Marie hastened to change the subject.

"You spoke of reading Prof. Royce's 'Philosophy of Loyalty,'" she said. "Are you a disciple of Prof. Royce?"

"Oh, no," answered the cabbie, cheery once more, "*I* am a Pragmatist."

"Gee," said Philip, "don't tell me you are a member of the Harvard Club!"

"The nearest I ever got to that," answered the other, "was the curb. No, Sir, I learned myself."

("He done a good job," whispered Marie in Philip's ear.)

"Did you do it all while you were driving a cab?" asked Philip.

"Yes, Sir. The Tenderloin drove me to drink—of the Pierian Spring. I developed bibliomania in self defence. Would you like to hear about it?"

His rubicund face shone with amiable vanity. To refuse him would have been cruel. But neither wished to refuse.

"Come and sit on a bench," said Marie, "and tell us."

He shook his head. "No," he answered. "I dassn't. Somebody is sure to sit down on me."

"I'll put my cane across you," said Philip. To this the old gentleman consented. They hunted out a secluded bench, and with Philip's stick across his lap he sat between them and told the tale of

The Bibliomaniacal Cabbie

"THERE'S nothin' to this line o' dope the near high-brows hand out, who write books about 'In Key with the Eternal Verities,' and such like," he began, "and the Ethical Torture teachers, too—I mean this dope that anybody can make himself what he wants to be, if he wants to be it hard enough. It's like the from-the-log-cabin-to-the-White-House pipe dream that any boy can be President, they used to hand us down in the old North Moore Street school when I was a kid. The will to believe in yourself is all very well, if it don't end by sourin' you on the cosmos when your vanity gets the jolt that's waitin' for it. God started out to make me a poet—He gave me an Irish mother. But He botched the job by givin' me an English father. I tried to mend the bungle for myself an' be a Keats. I ended by bein' a cabbie.

"The best compromise I could strike with my environment was to collect books, since I couldn't write 'em. I've never turned out

a poem like Shelley, but I got a copy of the first edition of 'The Cenci,' an' there was only two hundred and fifty of 'em printed! Many a time, as I've waited out in the slush for a G. M. Cohan show to get over, so's I could take my fare an' his fat fairy to some gilded lobster palace, waited blowin' on my fingers an' swingin' my arms, and looked at by my fare when he did come like the scum under his feet, many a time, I say, I've thought how I'd be ashamed to go to a G. M. Cohan show, but my fare, he wouldn't read six pages of 'The Cenci,' an' couldn't tell a first from an East Aurora re-print bound in lame—I mean limp—leather, lined with a piece o' yellow silk petticoat. It was a damn lot o' comfort, I want to tell yer—I begs your pardon, Miss!"

"Not at all," said Marie. "I agree with you entirely."

"Well, now, you're the right sort, you are," said the cabbie. "I'll bet your beau here went to college and learnt all about books easy. It wa'n't easy for me. I couldn't go to college,

I had to go to work in the stable. Saint Gaudens, him as made the bronze statue down there of the gent who said, 'War is Hell,' he had genius. He didn't go to no college, neither, but he could make things with his hands, an' he'd have carved his way up if he'd started as low as I did. But I didn't have no genius drivin' me. I just knew I loved to read, and I made rhymes about things—mostly my teachers; and my old Irish mother, God rest her soul, told me tales of the fairies back in the old country. But when I went to work I just took natural to the stables, an' never knowed there was anythin' else I could do. Fact, I don't know it now—there wa'n't nothin' else. God made me a cabbie."

The old man lapsed into silence, rubbing his hat.

"But the collecting?" Philip prompted.

"Well, you see, it was this way," he continued; "a cabbie has lots o' time to think. Most folks has more time to think than they ever use, I reckon. I got to thinkin' one day

that what a man did for a livin' didn't so much matter as how he lived. It was easy enough to say we was as good as the folks we drove to the opera, but I'd never really believed that line o' con, though I'd handed it out over the bar, like the others. But, thinks I this day I'm tellin' you of, I *can* be just as good as the swells. Not that I could ever eat with 'em, and talk with 'em, and be one of 'em. There were some of 'em I wouldn't want to talk with, and that's straight. But, thinks I, there must be things a man turns over in his nut which don't have nothin' to do with birth or money, which a cabbie can have as well as a swell—ideas and things; and maybe, thinks I, they're just as good an' can make him just as happy as a brown stone house, and joy rags, and an opera box.

"So I took to wonderin' what one o' these things was that I could get ahold of, never dreamin' it might be books, till one day, waitin' for a fare on Fourth Avenue, I picks up a copy of Chaucer out front of a second

hand shop, an' opened to somethin' I never forgot. Old Mortality used to open his Bible chance like, an' go by what he read. Well, I've went by what I read in Chaucer. It was hard readin' for me then. You know Artemus Ward says Chaucer was a great pote, but he couldn't spell. But I made out the meanin'. I've never forgot them lines. They go this way:

"And as for me, though than I konne but lyte,
On bokes for to rede I me delyte,
And to hem yive I feyth and full credence,
And in myn herte have hem in reverence
So hertely, that ther is game noon,
That fro my bokes maketh me to goon."

"Isn't there *one* game, croquet?" put in Marie, slyly.

The old cabbie grinned. "Maybe so," he said. "But not in them days. Well, I just set to work to learn myself about books. Of course, I'd read story books, and magazines, and some his'tries. But I wanted to know about real books, an' to have real books of my own. When I think o' them days!

Well, I even dreamed o' writin' a book myself, a poetry book. I sat up nights grindin' at it for a month—an' then I read Keats, an' tore it all up."

"To have the courage!" said Philip, half to himself.

"Well, it come hard," said the cabbie. "But, Lor', what stuff it was! So that learnt me one thing—I wa'n't no poet. After that I just stuck to readin' and collectin'."

"But," said Philip, "you say you have a first of 'The Cenci.' That's one of the rarest of Shelley items. How did you learn about firsts, and how could you afford to buy them?"

"It was a dead man's butler that put me next," he answered.

Marie and Philip looked at him in wonder.

"Fact," he continued. "The family lived down on East Fifteenth Street, which was some swell in them days—old Knickerbocker family, fine old father with a big library, an' children who cared more for the ponies. Well, I used to bring home the son from

places often, an' got to know the butler—sometimes needed his help. Pardon these details, Miss! One day the old fellow died an' then, a bit after, the butler showed me fifty bones he'd got from a second hand book dealer for a barrel o' pamphlets an' stuff the family'd cleaned off the old man's shelves. Thinks I, I'll go see it. I liked the old man, an' I had a hunch there might be some New York historical stuff in the barrel. Drivin' around the streets all day, you get a hankerin' to know somethin' about their history. That's how I learnt all the Park gates here have names. Ever know that? That's the Stoodent's Gate down at the Plaza. It's the Children's Gate on the Avenue, at Seventy-second Street. Odd, ain't it, how nobody ever calls 'em by their names?

"Well, I went to the dealer's, and, Holy Tootin' Taxicabs, what do you think? He had twenty o' them old books an' pamphlets priced at over fifty plunks apiece, and was gettin' it, too!

"That put me wise, all right, all right.

First, I began by hangin' round the old book shops, and talkin' with the dealers. Then I slipped up to Bangs' when I could get off, an' studied priced catalogues. I didn't read nothin' for months but stuff about collectin.' An' when I thought I knew a bit about it, I began to watch the death notices in the papers.

" It was the old fellers I was after, who'd lived in the same house for a life-time. Nobody lives in a house in this town for a life-time any more. 'Bout once in twenty—maybe not so often—the butler'd have old stuff from clearin' up the library, he was glad to let me look over. That's how I started my collection. I was makin' good money an' livin' single, so's I had plenty to spend. I began to gather in American firsts at figures you wouldn't believe, an' sellin' duplicates enough to give me money to take a flyer now and then at Bangs' for the big stuff, so for a while I was buyin' fast. 'Course, I bought a heap o' dead ones. But I got the junk weeded out now, and I got 800 beauts, I tell you. An'

what's more, I've read 'em all. Them an' croquet, what more does a man want? I guess the swells don't put it over me much, after all!"

"What have you got?" said Philip.

"Well, I ain't no John Carter Brown, nor a J. Pierpont Morgan. I ain't got a First Folio of Shakespeare nor a Bay Psalm Book, nor a whole row o' tall Caxtons. I ain't got any incunabula that are worth much, 'cept to me. I got one or two wormy ones just to show how printin' began. They do well enough, and you can get 'em cheap. 'Course, I'd like to own the Psalter of Mentz, the first dated book. The edition dated 1459, two years later, sold for most $25,000 in 1884. I'd have to run a taxicab to buy that —and it ain't worth it! I ain't got no Caxtons, either. All the rich bugs is after Caxtons now. They're way up where the Elzevirs used to be, most as high as the Elzevirs is said to be in fool novels. When I begun collectin', the Elzevirs had begun to go down, but the Aldines were still up. They've

knocked them down now, too. I got two myself. Alas, the fall in their values shows the decline of classic culture!"

And the old cabbie sighed profoundly.

But he soon cheered up and continued his catalogue. "The first really good books I got," he said, "were Baskervilles. I ain't got the Folio Bible of 1763, but I got the three volume Congreve, with the Kneller portrait, and the Esop, with the pretty vignettes. The Baskerville Press is goin' to be more appreciated than it is some day; that feller could print, I tell you! I bought 'em in the open market and they represent some waitin' in front o' lobster palaces, an' don't you forget it. But most o' my good stuff come out of the butlers' barrels, and it's Americana. T'be sure, I got 'The Cenci' off a butler, an' the first edition of the Rubáiyát——"

"What!" cried Philip, "don't tell me you have that?"

"I sure have," said the cabbie. "Paid five bones for it, along with a lot o' New York pamphlets and some junk. That was

the day I most got the elephant folio of Audubon's Birds."

Again the cabbie sighed deeply.

"They were hard up, that family," he went on. "I offered the daughter fifty dollars for the Audubon, prayin' she didn't know. And I guess she didn't; she was nothin' but a kid. But just then the widdy come into the room, an' gummed the game. That's where I was stung a couple o' thousand, maybe more."

He ruminated a moment in silence.

"I got a first of Higginson's 'New Englands Plantation,'" he continued, "out of another barrel. That's good for five hundred plunks any time. And I got a first of Lowell's Commemoration Ode. I guess that's goin' some."

"Hold on!" cried Philip. "There are limits, you know! Don't tell me you got that out of a barrel."

"How else would I get it? You don't s'pose I could buy it in open market, do you, an' me a cabbie? I soaked my fares some

in my day, but I wa'n't no Shylock. I got a 'White Footed Deer,' too, off the same butler. Both of 'em was covered with dust. They're under cover now, you can bet."

"Who wrote 'The White Footed Deer'?" asked Marie.

"Bryant," said Philip. "This is incredible. I'm going to haunt dead men's doors."

"Maybe I was born lucky," said the old cabbie. "I got a first of 'Alice in Wonderland' and 'Through the Lookin' Glass' 'cause the kids had growed up an' didn't want 'em no more. And—here's a good one!—one day, way back twenty-eight years ago, I took a bally Britisher up from the steamer to his hotel, an' he left a book in the cab, an' never come for it. Guess what it was?"

"Tell me," said Philip. "I'll believe anything."

"It was Burton's 'Kasîdah.' Ever read it?"

"Yes, I've read it," answered Philip, a little testily. "I've *got* it. *My* edition cost two fifty, though, and was printed in 1900.

There were only one hundred copies of the first—yours. They bring something like two hundred and fifty when one of them turns up."

"Exactly," said the old cabby, with a genial smile, "exactly. You know, I get my Omar out o' that, instead of FitzGerald. In the old days when we had horse cars in New York I used to listen to 'em comin' through the side streets, jinglin', janglin' above the roar, an' say to myself, over an' over,

Wend now thy way with brow serene, fear not thy humble tale to tell;—
The whisper of the Desert-wind, the Tinkling of the Camel's bell.

Sometimes I'd shut my eyes, an' most make myself think for a minute I was in the desert. An' somehow the lines made me feel better, more contented, maybe, with bein' a cabbie. I was some sore when the old horse cars was taken off. That's the great thing about books—you keep 'em at home, where they're always waitin' for you, patient like; but you take 'em out with you, too, an' they come

at you sudden in bits, sometimes, makin' the place where you are or the thing you're doin' all glorified."

"Oh, lovely!" cried Marie, clapping her hands.

The old cabbie beamed appreciation upon her.

"Say, let an illiterate old collector give you two young uns a tip," he said. "Now, this is straight. You two'll get spliced some day——"

Marie turned fiery red, and Philip raised his hand to protest, but the old cabbie laughed jovially, and was not to be rebuked.

"You'll get spliced some day," he went on, this time turning to Philip, "and you'll have the dough to do it, which I didn't—to support a madam and a book shelf at the same time, I mean. Now you love 'em both, see? I ain't sayin' maybe I couldn't 'a' kept a wife, but there wa'n't no wife for me in my class. There ain't many women folks who understand an' love books, nohow; they may say they do, but they'd just as soon have

a last edition as a first, maybe sooner. And there ain't none in the class I come from. But your girl, here, she's different. Now, you two'll start a little library an' it'll grow and grow, an' be a comfort to you both all your life long."

"That depends on whether you have to move—the comfort, I mean," said Marie, coloring hotly when she thought of the context.

"Folks move too much," said the old fellow. "It's the curse of the age. But when you get books, get good uns. Don't believe this con about editions not matterin'. That's bromide stuff. A man who'll read a poem in a cheap reprint when he could read it in a first would wear a paste diamond when he could have the real stone. And it ain't only what's in the books that counts; it's havin' the fun o' collectin' 'em, the pride o' ownin' 'em. You can't collect nothin' that's more worth collectin', and any man who don't collect *somethin'*—well, he may be layin' up for himself treasures in heaven, but it's more

likely he's layin' up to a bar. I tell you, it don't matter who you are or what kind o' folks you sprung from, Man's got an instinct to gather round him some little bit o' the good things o' this world, an' it's one o' the instincts that boosts him up above the beasts, I don't give a tarnation damn—excuse again, Miss—what the preachers say.

"Goin' on forty year I've steered a cab round this village an' been the scum under rich dames' silken shoes; but up in my room under the roof of a house where they wouldn't soil their skirts by enterin', I've been layin' up treasures that have made more of a man o' me than some o' them ladies—which is Irish; that for goin' on thirty year have been waitin' for me when I gets home at night, like a reception of the best society; that have put lines o' poetry into my head an' comfort into my heart; that have learned me to see things interestin' and beautiful as I drove round the town; and that, any time I get hard up, can be turned into cash every bit as good as stocks and bonds. They ain't

never learned me to talk right grammar, but ain't the body more than the raiment? "

"A great, great deal more," said Marie, smiling at him.

"But," said Philip, "won't you let us see your books some time? The first of Fitz-Gerald's Rub——"

The old cabbie had suddenly risen.

"I must be goin'" he said hastily.

Before either could detain him he had stepped into the path, and moved quickly away. To their astonished eyes, he seemed to slip directly through a baby carriage. They were looking into the sun; perhaps it blinded them. In another moment there was no old man to be seen.

"There ain't no such animal!" gasped Philip, sinking back on the bench.

"Come on, quick!" said Marie.

They hastened to the croquet lawn. All the old men had vanished. Again they climbed the rail. There were no stakes nor arches. Yet, where the arches had been, the

grass seemed to be worn. Just then they saw a Park officer hurrying toward them, gesticulating angrily—and they fled.

"It was good advice, just the same," panted Child Marie, as she sat down in the summer-house by the rocks.

Child Philip sat down beside her.

"It was very good advice," he answered. "I'll bet there is something in that dead man's butler game."

"Boy," said Marie, "I don't mean that at all. I mean about having good books, and the contents of good books, in the background of your consciousness to add meaning and beauty to the more or less humdrum and sordid daily facts of life."

"Naturally," said Philip. "Don't be a bromide."

She looked at him quickly, hurt.

"Pardon me, Marie," he cried, with instant penitence, putting out his hand. "But I can't get over *his* having a first of the Rubáiyát."

"Are you sure he has?" said Marie.

"I'm not sure of anything! Yes I am, too. I'm sure of one thing."

"And that is?"

"How many books have you got?" asked Philip.

"I don't know, two hundred, maybe. Of course, they aren't firsts, as you say. A great many of them I fear are lasts. And I'm sure I haven't any incunabula—whatever they are. But what has that got to do——"

"I've got about eight hundred," Philip remarked as if to himself. "A lot of them are reference books I have to own. One can't work in the Astor Library, dirty old hole. Of course, there'd be some duplicates——"

"What *are* you talking about?" asked Marie.

He looked at her oddly. "I was just thinking," he answered, "of something the old cabbie said."

He continued to look at her, and moved closer on the bench. She shrank as if frightened.

"Did you notice," he said, "that the old cabbie never knew we were children?"

"You—you seem glad."

"I am, I am very glad. He was, maybe, a discerning old collector after all, who knows?"

Marie rose quickly.

"We *are* children," she said. "We *must* be children, do you understand? If you grow up, Boy, I shall never come here to the Run-away Place again. That was our bargain; you must keep it."

"Maybe I mustn't, maybe I won't, maybe I can't," he replied, smiling up at her.

But his smile was not returned. Her face had grown very grave.

"If you won't," she said, "I am very sorry, for I shall never see you again. Good-bye."

He sprang to her side.

"I won't, I won't, honest Injun," he cried. "I'll be a child, an infant. I'll google and drule. Only come again."

She smiled at him gravely.

"You needn't google and drule," she said. "But next time you musn't be over ten, and you must play very nicely. You mustn't pick up the bugle. Will you promise?"

He raised his right hand.

"So help me!" he said.

So at the little gate in the wall at Sixty-seventh Street she left him. He watched her out of sight, and then turned toward the lawn where the old men had played croquet. In the centre of it, quite alone, a squirrel was sitting on his hind legs, eating a peanut.

CHAPTER VI

THE GLUEBIRD AND THE DUTCH BABY

THE Bluebird stood on his wooden perch behind the glass doors of the cabinet, and looked out over the kindergarten room, to where, beyond the windows, the trees in the court yard were beginning to put on their summer green.

All through the long, cold months he had stood so, wondering to see the bare limbs of autumn, wondering still more to see the whiteness of winter, and to feel the icy breath that crept sobbing through the key-hole, on the days when the room stood empty and silent. This, then, this cold breath, was the meaning of all those strange South feelings that drove one to forsake nest and comfort every year, and to fly, fly, fly till one almost dropped. He had never really understood why until now. How fortunate one had those irresistible

South feelings! He shivered as he remembered the cold that came creeping through the key-hole.

Only once since he had come to live there had he left the cabinet, so he would have remembered the occasion, even if it had not been connected with great events. The first of these events was the coming of a tree, a hemlock, which appeared in the room one day. Then the cabinet door was unlocked, and he was taken out, and his wooden perch fastened to one of the branches, while a ring of dancing children shouted, "Fly, bluebird, fly!" and, "Sing us a song!" He had tried, but his voice was gone.

The second event was that after this one brief, gay adventure, he had kept watch over an empty room for many days—how long they seemed!—while outside the window there was much whiteness, and the wind in the key-hole moaned every night. Then came a day when the room was again full of children and chatter, and he remembered it well, because on that day the Dutch Baby first came to smile at

him, which was the last and greatest event that happened to the Bluebird.

He had never been a proud fellow as birds go. Of course, it was only natural that he should favor blue as a choice of costume, and he sometimes had a consciousness that the manners of the Robin family were not so delicate as his own—consider the question of keeping in the public eye, for instance! But after the coming of the Dutch Baby, it took all his strength of mind to remain modest, for from that first morning when the smile had crept through the key-hole, like a breath of summer, and a moist finger had plastered a moist kiss on the glass immediately protecting his beak, the Dutch Baby had had eyes for nothing else.

The Bird wished sometimes that it could hear what the Dutch Baby was saying as he stood in front of the cabinet, with adoring eyes, but the glass prevented that, and how seldom the door was opened! Not that he had minded this very much during the long, cold time, but now those days of eerie winds

were over, and a great longing filled his soul, a longing to leave his wooden perch in the cabinet and once more to feel the swinging branch beneath his feet, to rock like a blue flower in the breeze, to play "Hunt the worm" with other sprightly comrades. He was afraid to try his voice, but once in the free air, who knew what might happen? Perhaps—perhaps he might even fly! And ever and again he looked wistfully at the young green beyond the windows.

And then there came a morning when the Dutch Baby stood in front of the cabinet with a face of exalted solemnity, a solemnity arising not from sorrow but from a too deep sense of anticipation. For many minutes he stood there, motionless, then slowly and with the same triumphant gravity he began to dance. Up and down and one—two—three, up and down and one—two—three, while the strains of "The Mosquito Parade" floated into the room. The teacher stopped in the doorway:

"The wine of spring," she murmured.

The Dutch Baby turned around, stopped

one leg in mid-air, and said without punctuation, "Goot-morning I haf a kiss for you see mine socks the day it iss when der Gluebird out comes for him I dance."

Long training had enabled teacher to digest morsels of this sort without an effort. She shook hands, admired the socks, took the kiss, and produced the key to the cabinet. The Bluebird's dreams were coming true! He was to spend a day in the great world again. The Dutch Baby received him as a devout worshiper receives the holy bread.

"Ach, mein Gluebird!" he crooned, and ran his fore-finger from tip to tail. "Ach, mine Gluebird! So goot you are. Like der sky iss you back, und der rest like mein socks. All day near me you shall stay, und after—" here he stopped, and in his eyes began to grow the light of a great purpose—"und after to der Park we will go, und play, und play, und play!"

"Hans," said teacher, "what are you talking about?"

"To mine Gluebird wass I speaking," came

the dignified answer. "So long hass he not heard me! Could I to mein house bring him? Und to-morrow he should come back."

"No, Hans," said teacher. "You come to-morrow, and the Bluebird will be waiting for you here."

The Dutch Baby said nothing, but the light of the great purpose still glowed.

Now see on what slender threads our fortunes hang, the Bluebird's on a yard of black veiling which, blown by the breeze from the window, was hiding under the dressing table in Dutch Baby's mutter's room, while mutter herself hunted through bureau drawers with one eye on the clock.

"For you he'll surely wait," said the Dutch Baby's tante. "Never will he start for home alone."

But tante had not seen the glow of the great purpose, nor did she know that at the very moment of her comforting assurance, the Dutch Baby, with the Bluebird buttoned close to his knocking heart, was standing tip-toe on the corner of the street. To the east lay

home, convention, the commonplace, to the west, freedom, adventure, glory—in a word, the Park. A thousand green fingers beckoned alluringly, a thousand invisible cords wound themselves about the brown and yellow socks and pulled away from duty. The poise for flight became merged into flight itself, and with feet that scarce touched the stones the Dutch Baby flew toward the beckoning green fingers at the end of the street.

Only once did he pause for breath—or was is that?—when at last he had passed within the enchanted gateway, and a donkey bestridden by a ruffled cherub crossed the path in front of him. He cautiously undid the top button of his coat, and drew the Bluebird's head into the light of day.

"Ach, mein Gluebird," he whispered, "many moneys it takes to ride, udderwise would I ride mit you. But soon we will play."

The Bluebird said nothing,—was not his voice gone? Yet how green the trees were! And that smell of earth, how well he remembered it! And what banquets it suggested!

Could it be that his mouth was watering? But the Dutch Baby was again in flight, and the swift and unaccustomed rush of air, against a face so long shut from it, drove the Bluebird's thoughts quite away.

How fast the Dutch Baby could travel! On, on, he sped, past summer-houses, across roads, under bridges, and finally up a little incline to a smooth, green place, which stretched out vastly on both sides of a broad path where the trees arched overhead. At intervals the Bluebird could see great stone pieces, with figures atop, standing on the green. The Dutch Baby glanced around him.

"Behind der shentleman will we sit," he said, "on der grass, und den you shall come out."

"You see," Child Philip was saying, argumentatively, "I am absolutely ready and willing to fulfill my promise, but you do not help a bit. I am ready and willing to be ten, and not a day over, but here you are walking more or less demurely in the garb of maturity, you

who insisted on being children. If the perfectly natural impulse should seize me to ride a donkey, or drive a goat carriage, or make my tummy sick on the carousel, *you* wouldn't dare do it, too. A fine child, you are!"

Marie began to twinkle. "I'd do any of them, if *you* would," she said, "particularly the goat carriages in the Mall—if it wasn't for the statues!"

"If you were really a child you wouldn't mind the statues—you'd rather like 'em. Coward, I dare you to keep your own promise and be ten for the afternoon."

Marie stopped suddenly, and looked up at him with eyes in which a mysterious gleam had replaced the twinkle.

"Over there," she said, pointing, "is something folk call the Mall, and if we should cross it over the road, we'd see the statues. But there is another way, an enchanted way. Follow me."

She ran swiftly down a descending path, through a dark cavern that echoed one's footsteps, Philip pounding after. They mounted

stone steps at the farther end, and found themselves under ancient, arching trees. And just at that instant the Dutch Baby and the Bluebird sat down behind Sir Walter Scott.

Child Marie grasped Philip's arm and pointed to the small, dark object in the rear of the pondering statue.

"What do you see?" she exclaimed..

Philip looked, and they moved silently nearer. The Dutch Baby was taking the Bluebird tenderly from his bosom and putting him on the grass, smoothing a ruffled tail-feather with eager fingers.

"Ach, mein Gluebird," they heard him say, "here *iss* der Park. Now could you fly, und sing, und catch der——" He paused and wrinkled his forehead. "Auf English I cannot tell it, but you could of them eat," he finished triumphantly, "und on der ground dey lif und choomp."

The Bluebird listened with upturned beak. Around him blew again the free air of spring; the grass tickled his feet, and in his nostrils quivered the sense of a near-by worm. Above

his head green branches waved, and a jaunty robin ran along the edge of the path. But he did not move. There was a strange stiffness in his legs, and though he knew he ought to be hungry, he wasn't. His wings, too, how heavy they felt!

Child Marie and Philip drew nearer, but the Dutch Baby heeded them not. With twinkling legs he gyrated in front of the passive Bluebird.

"See!" he cried, "like dis you should fly, und now I am *really* a bird!"

He climbed two steps up the stone pedestal of the statue, and with outstretched arms launched himself on the wings of faith.

Child Marie gave an involuntary exclamation. "He'll hurt himself," she whispered. "We ought to stop him."

"Sh!" said Philip. "No child gets hurt in a fairy tale."

The Dutch Baby picked himself up. "A bird I wass," he proudly said, "und on der ground wass I looking for what to eat. Now you should do it," he continued to the bird.

"On der step will I put you, und den off der step shall you fly."

The Bluebird did his best, and, the stone being slippery to his unaccustomed feet, his flight and the Dutch Baby's were strangely similar.

"Ach, you goot Gluebird," crooned the baby, resetting him on his feet, "you could fly choost der same like me."

Then for the first time he looked up and saw Child Marie and Philip. He regarded them gravely. Philip took off his hat.

"Good-afternoon," he said, "we should like to play with you if you don't mind. And would you please tell us how old you are?"

The Dutch Baby held up an earthy palm. "All of dose am I," he said pointing to his fingers.

"We are ten," said Philip politely, "but we hope you will not think that too old."

The Dutch Baby looked sceptical. "Gretchen haf fünf more fingers as me," he said, "und Gretchen haf not to be a young lady."

"Never mind about Gretchen," said Philip.

" You come out here and you will find us better to play with than that bird. We'll do exactly as you say."

The Dutch Baby pondered for a moment, while again the light of a great purpose grew in his eyes. Then he stooped down and gathered the bird once more to his bosom.

" Choost what I say will they do," he murmured. " Den to der donkeys, und der goats, und der wasser boats will we go. Ach, mein Gluebird! Soldiers will we be, und sailors, und round we will go on der run-away horses, und peanuts will we buy! "

He finished with a sigh of joy.

The Bluebird assented passively. He wished he could overcome the lassitude that dragged at his legs. They seemed as powerless as his voice, and he could not understand it—he, the sprightly, the active, who erstwhile had outdistanced all his fellows in the north and southward flights. He was glad to find, however, that his quiescence did not lessen his charm for the Dutch Baby. For a moment after the new-comers spoke in their

slighting way he had trembled, but the Baby was loyal. And now the Baby turned to Philip and Child Marie.

"Come," he said," first we will haf a carriage play."

"Yes?" said Philip, "First we will have a carriage play? That will be very nice. How do you play it?"

Child Marie began to chuckle. "I know how,—I certainly do," she whispered. "I've done it a thousand times. Oh, Boy Philip, if only your legs weren't quite so long!"

"My legs?" said Philip, "What have they to do with it?"

Marie laughed again. "It's a pity we can't rejuvenate our bodies as well as our souls," she said.

"And it's a pity that you're talking like seventy instead of seven," retorted Philip. "Stop it at once."

The Dutch Baby had been trotting ahead of them toward the upper end of the Mall. Now he paused in front of a row of infinitesimal carriages. The motive powers lay in-

dolently on the ground wagging their beards like ancient farmers.

"Get in," he commanded. "Der driver I am, und to me you should pay der change."

Philip looked at Child Marie. "I understand your mirth," he said grimly, "but I won't be a quitter, not if it smashes the carriage. Only, if I go this time, you've got to go next."

"All right," said Marie, "you first."

Philip raised one foot to enter the chariot.

"Here, you," rose a raucous voice, and an attendant in livery sprang from a nearby bench. "Youse is too big to go in that there; it's fer children."

"Pardon me," said Philip, "I know that. I'm just ten myself."

"Ah, go on," said the gentlemanly attendant, "quit yer kiddin!"

"Exactly what you're forcing me to do," said Philip politely. "But this young lady here," he continued, "mayn't she ride? I hardly think she would over-burden your chariot."

The attendant eyed Marie, "Yere," he said, "she kin if she wants ter, she ain't big enough to hurt it none."

Child Marie turned and regarded Philip witheringly. "Mean!" she said. "Just wait till we get to the carousel. That's strong."

The Dutch Baby had climbed to the driver's seat, and urged the reluctant goats to their feet. Now he turned to the attendant.

"You should stay here," he commanded. "My carriage it iss."

Child Marie nodded. "I'll see that he goes all right," she whispered. Then she got in and sat down. "I never realized before how grown-up my knees are," she observed, as the Dutch Baby cracked his whip and the chariot started down the length of the Mall. He laughed aloud.

"Ach, mein Gluebird," he said joyfully, "am I not der fine driver! Und my horses, how fast they go! All der peeples look to see how fine I drive."

They certainly looked, but Child Marie was acutely conscious that the passenger and not the driver was the object of their gaze.

Philip and the attendant waited their coming. "Again we should go," said the Dutch Baby enthusiastically, as the money was gravely handed over by Philip. "Sooch a fine driver I am!"

But Child Marie hastily descended. "I think not," she said. "There won't be time for all the other plays if we go again."

Philip laughed. "Has it lost its flavor?" he inquired. "Oh, Child Marie, didn't you really enjoy it?"

The girl reddened. "I certainly didn't, very much," she said. "I felt more or less foolish. And now I feel foolish to think I felt so. It's nasty and complex. It didn't used to be so. Anyway, I didn't see one of the statues!"

"Cheer up," said Philip, "It takes some time to get acclimated. Maybe the next play will go better."

The Dutch Baby stood looking on. "Der

next play," he announced, "will be der donkeys."

Philip and Child Marie looked at each other, then laughed simultaneously.

"Didn't you use to do it?" he inquired.

"Of course I did, didn't you?" she answered.

"Equally of course; and you said you'd do it again."

"I know I did," said she, "and I thought I meant it. At least, I almost thought so."

"I quite did," said Philip. "It will be grand!"

"Ain't you coming by me?" queried the Dutch Baby.

Philip nodded. "Lead on," he said, "we are if you'll let us."

The Dutch Baby drew the girl to one side. "When I hit him you should run," he whispered.

"Hit him?" said Marie.

"Ja," said the other, "it iss tag."

"All right, where shall I run to?" she whispered back.

The Baby deliberated. "I said to der donkeys we would go, but first on der run-away horses shall we ride," he said. "You should run dere," and he indicated the path to the carousel with a lordly gesture.

"Look here," said Philip, "if you two don't stop whispering, I'm going home. It's not fair."

The Dutch Baby sidled up to him and gave him a resounding thump on the leg. "Tag!" he shouted, and sped down the path after Marie, who was already diminishing into perspective.

Philip jammed on his hat, seized his glasses, and pursued. Far ahead, a slim, blue Atalanta fled before him. In the middle distance, a small pair of brown and yellow legs twinkled over the ground, and at his heels a joyous terrier, sprung from nowhere, yapped and capered.

"Go it, young feller," shouted an onlooking urchin.

"Ah, his goil kin beat him," taunted another.

Philip rapidly over-hauled the Dutch Baby. "Tag yourself," he cried, bending to clap the diminutive shoulder.

The Dutch Baby did not pause. "You should got to catch her," he panted, "I come after."

"All right," said Philip, "here goes if you say so, but you'd better come along with me—I might get lost."

"Nein," said the other, "der Gluebird likes I should go slower now, und you should tag der girl, und den you will find der runaway horses."

Philip nodded, and again took up the pursuit of a small blue speck just disappearing around the corner. In his young days he had covered the low hurdles in twenty-five flat, but Child Marie had a good start, and not for nothing had she been known in the distant past as the best runner on the block. When Philip arrived at the carousel a slightly disheveled and gently panting young lady was seated on one of the benches, with her back to the path.

He tip-toed up, and tapped her on the shoulder. "Tag," he said, "you're it!"

"Tag nothing!" said Marie, turning upon him indignantly. "This is hunk, and you know it. I beat you all to pieces." She giggled. "I always did beat all the boys."

"Beat me?" said Philip, "of course you beat me. Didn't I stop and talk to the Dutch Baby for a couple of hours? Why wouldn't you beat me?"

"By the way," said Marie, "where is the Dutch Baby?"

"Oh, he'll be along," said Philip. "The Bluebird got tired of traveling by express."

A small voice spoke at their elbow. "Haf you der tickets?" it said.

"Oh, here you are," said Philip. "Dutch Baby, do you really like to ride on that thing?"

The Dutch Baby looked greedily at the enclosure, where a circle of prancing animals pursued each other with dizzy speed, and the voice of Die Lustige Witwe was heard in the land.

"Sure," he said, "als besser as anything. A soldier I am, und in my hand a sword I hold—und strike, und strike, und strike."

His voice became a chant, and his eyes took on a far-away expression in which one could see a long line of warlike German ancestors.

Philip turned to Marie, "Don't say that you like it, too," he pleaded.

"Like it?" she returned, "like it?—I love it!" And her eyes grew misty with memory, and Philip could see that he and the Dutch Baby were as if they were not.

"Marie," he begged, "please don't go away, or, if you must, take me with you. I feel like an anachronism."

Marie smiled, a vague, half-listening sort of smile. "I was very little," she said, "as little as Dutch Baby, and the nurse was red haired, and her name was Abina—Abina McCarthy. She used to bring me here every day, and I would ride for hours while she talked to the Man in Charge. He never let me buy my tickets. I've often wondered if he isn't responsible for the curvature of my

brain. It all comes back to me now. I can almost hear the tune."

And she gave a reminiscent little sigh.

"Child Marie," said Philip abruptly, "some day will you show me a picture of little You?"

The girl re-entered the present, with a jump. "Why?"

"Because it is a picture of little You," said Philip.

She looked away from him and her eyelids fluttered.

"Will you?" he persisted.

"A great many things can happen some day," she said evasively.

A small voice broke the somewhat tense pause. "Over dere, choost where you are looking, iss where are der tickets," it said politely.

Philip still looked at the girl intently. "No," he said, "you have made a mistake. There are no tickets where I was looking. One doesn't go there by ticket at all."

The Dutch Baby looked puzzled. "But

in his hand he haf dem," he insisted, "und der Gluebird is wanting to ride."

Philip laughed. "The Bluebird, eh? Keep it up, young one," he said. "That same disinterested altruism has made many a saint's reputation."

"Ja?" said the Baby. "Auf English you do not talk now."

Philip walked over to the Man in Charge. "Four tickets, please," he said.

"Four?" said Marie.

"Sh!" said Philip, "you forget the Bluebird."

He handed two to the Dutch Baby. "There you are—for you and your impatient friend," he said.

The Baby took them solemnly, and offered one to the Man in Charge. "On der same horse we sit," he explained, "und den two rides can we haf."

Marie laughed. "Imagination has small chance against thrift, when the battle is on German territory," she said.

The Dutch Baby looked at her inquiringly.

"Auf English you do not speak, neider," he said. "Gretchen haf not words like dose."

The giddy steeds came to a standstill at that moment, and he walked over to them.

"Der black one I will ride," said the Baby. "Large he is, und strong, und two can he carry."

He climbed up and grasped the sword. "Now you on der next," he shouted to Marie. "Und you behind," he signified to Philip with a gesture of command.

Marie sprang to the saddle and arranged her skirts. "I've been dipped in the fountain of youth," she cried gleefully.

Philip turned pale. "The results be on your head," he said to Marie. "I shall be dippy in the fountain of youth! If I have to be borne to the hospital, promise you will come along."

"You can write me poems like Henley," said she.

"Out of the dark that covers me!" cried poor, pale Philip, as the machine began its slow revolution.

The horses were now turning faster and faster in their never-ending, ever-vain pursuit.

"Take der swords, soldiers we are!" they heard above the shriek of the calliopic organ box. "For der gold ring you could get anudder ride!"

But Marie and Philip heeded not. Grasping the uprights in front of them, they shut their eyes, and wished for death. The monsters whirled madly on. Would they never tire of their hideous revolutions? On, on, endlessly on! The Merry Widow had been waltzed off the stage and back again, before the maddened animals had satiated their lust for speed.

Philip dropped dizzily from his charger, and tottered toward Marie. She was leaning sick and faint against the side of the house.

"I thought you said you liked it," he murmured weakly.

"Don't be a beast," she gasped. "Help me to a bench."

The Dutch Baby from his height looked down at them scornfully. "Soldiers do not

so! See me," he said, brandishing the spike in his hand.

"All right," said Philip. "When the battle is over you can come outside and gather up the corpses."

Marie sat down on a bench, and leaned her head in her hand. "Can it be that I really did that for hours at a time?" she groaned. "Oh, Boy, I must be dreadfully grown up!"

"I always was, as far as that pleasure is concerned," he retorted. "I never could stand it, so there's no disillusion for me. Poor child, don't feel so sad about it. There are still the swan boats, and donkeys, and peanuts."

"In my present state, the thought of peanuts and boats is not exactly calculated to console. Do you suppose he'll insist on carrying out his entire program?"

The Dutch Baby came toward them holding the Bluebird in his hand. The bird had a wild, dazed look in his eye and his feathers were ruffled.

"He didn't enjoy it either," said Marie, breaking into a little laugh. "It's perfectly evident he was as disturbed as we were. I'm sure it's upset his stuffing, too."

("Stuffing?" thought the Bluebird, "Stuffing? Can she mean me?")

"Young man," said Philip to the Baby, "I see something in your eye. What is it?"

"Ja," said the Baby, "it iss peanuts. Der Gluebird iss hungry."

Philip handed him ten cents. "Go and gorge," he said.

"Nein," said the Baby. "You should come also. To der donkeys we go now, und her und me are der squirrels, und you should feed us."

They purchased the peanuts and again walked eastward. Philip turned to Marie.

"Now," he said, "I understand why you are not afraid of mice—or say you're not. You're really related to them, and the Dutch Baby, with the unerring instinct of childhood, has discovered it. Of course you are a squirrel."

Marie placed the tips of her fingers to her bosom, with an air of apologetic but expectant politeness, and looked at him with her head on one side.

"By jiminy," he said, "you do look like one, if only your nose weren't so retroussé. Never-the-less, here is a peanut."

She took it and put it in her pocket. "I'll store it away against next winter's cold," she said.

The Dutch Baby looked on disapprovingly. "You are not a goot squirrel," he said. "You come too quick."

Philip shook his head. "The second mistake, Dutch Baby," he said. "She comes so slowly that sometimes it seems as though she were not moving at all."

The color flamed up in the girl's face and she walked on swiftly.

"Hurry, Baby," she said. "It's getting late, and perhaps the donkeys will have gone to bed."

But the Baby did not heed her. He had run on a few steps, and now crouched down

in the middle of the walk in the attitude of expectant squirrelism. The Bluebird stood also in the center of the path. Philip held out a nut and whistled. The Dutch Baby sidled a few steps nearer, then turned and again ran away. The Bluebird remained in uncertain poise, his beak in the air, his eyes fixed on the tree-tops.

("How fortunate I never cared for peanuts," he thought.)

Philip whistled once more, and the Baby turned, ran back a little way, stopped, and again took the expectant attitude. "He would and yet he would not," sang Philip softly.

But now with an access of courage he crept up to the outstretched hand, seized the nut, and scampered to a nearby tree, where he squatted down and nibbled till it was gone. Then he came walking back.

"Der rest to der Gluebird you should gif," he said, and put the bag which Philip handed him in his pocket. "See! I wass a *real* squirrel!"

Philip turned to Marie. "Please don't copy him," he said.

They rounded a corner and came suddenly upon the donkeys. A small girl was astride of one, frightened yet happy, after the manner of her sex. Philip took off his hat, and made a low bow to Marie. There was a touch of irony in his tone.

"Princess, your steed awaits you," he said, "or is it a palfrey?"

"Alas," she answered, "it is a donkey, just a plain—a very plain, donkey." There was a tired little droop to the corners of her mouth and her elasticity was gone. "It's no use, Boy," she continued, "I should hate it, and feel like a fool into the bargain. I'm hopeless. I know I have ankles!"

She ended with a laugh that was more a sigh.

Philip regarded her quizzically. Perhaps he pitied, but he gave no sign. However, he made no motion to ride a donkey himself.

Instead, he said, "I think we'll both sit here and watch the Baby and then set him

face toward home and mother. I wonder if she knows where he is, by the way?"

The Dutch Baby was regarding the donkeys with a critical eye. He now laid his hand on the largest. "Dis one I should ride," he said.

"Come here, young man," said Philip. "Something has just occurred to me. Speaking colloquially, does your mother know you're out?"

The Baby looked at them both, while a solemn twinkle grew in his eye. Then he spoke.

"Der Gluebird it wass what brang me," he said. "How should he tell when he cannot to speak, und, besides, mein mutter haf he not seen."

Marie gave a horrified exclamation. "I never thought about his mother," she cried. "He seemed so adequate. Poor woman! She's probably dragging the river."

Philip took him by the hand with determination, and started northward.

"We'll go donkey-riding another day," he

said, "or rather you can. Put this in your wallet."

The Baby took the coin and tucked it carefully in his trouser pocket.

"All right," he said cheerfully. "Anudder day will I be der cholly miller on der donkey."

"Here's the gate," said Philip. "Shake hands, will you?"

The Baby gravely offered a much used palm.

"Good-bye, Dutch Baby," said Marie, "and please was it nice to have us to play with?"

The Baby looked from one to the other, then shook his head.

"I *wass* der driver und der soldier und der squirrel," he said. "*You* wass only playing."

And he and the Bluebird crossed the Avenue, and started down Seventy-second Street.

Marie and Philip stood in the Children's Gate, and watched him diminish. Before he turned into a speck he looked back, and waved his hand, which held something tightly.

"The 'Gluebird' is saying farewell," said Philip.

Marie turned, with a gesture of disgust. "I know what is the matter with us," she said, "*we're stuffed!* We can't play, or imagine, or make believe, any more than that bird can fly, or sing, or dig worms. *We're stuffed.* It's tragic, but it's true. And the Dutch Baby knew it, too. He said, 'I *wass* der driver, und der soldier, und der squirrel. *You* wass only playing.' Fancy his saying that!" She laughed, but there was a catch in her voice. "So we're symbolized by a stuffed bluebird! The sky is our glass case. Good-night, I must go."

She put out her hand. Philip took it, and held it.

"Why do you make such a tragedy out of being grown up?" he asked.

"Isn't it a tragedy?"

He shook his head. "That depends, that all depends," he said.

"Depends on what?" she asked, gently pulling on her hand.

"On you," he answered.

"Please," said Marie, "that is my hand you have. I find I need it myself."

She smiled, but a kind of ominous dignity had crept into her tone.

Philip released the hand. "I'd like to shake you, and not by the hand," he said, with a half smile.

"Why?" she inquired with some surprise.

"For that tone, which always terrorizes a man, if you must know," he replied. "And the worst of it is, the man is never sure whether he ought to be terrorized."

If he had expected the obvious retort, he was, in his turn, surprised. Marie did not fight back. Instead, a look of fear came over her face, and she spoke with simple frankness.

"We are grown up, there's no getting round it," she said, "and just for that reason you musn't see me any more. I cannot be grown up with you."

"Will you tell me why?" he asked.

She shook her head. "No," she said, "except that you won't leave the bugle alone."

"And you won't come here to the Runaway Place any more?"

Again she shook her head, "I've got to go to work again next week, anyway," she said evasively.

"But you won't, you *can't,* say good-bye like this. You'll at least come to-morrow, or next day?"

"I—I can't to-morrow," she replied, weakening under his gaze.

"Then Sunday?"

"I—I oughtn't."

"Thank you!" said he. "Now tell me this, aren't you the least little bit glad you're not ten?"

The girl glanced up the Avenue.

"The 'bus is coming," she said, and started to move away.

He caught her by the wrist and looked at her hard in the eyes. "Answer me," he said, imperiously.

"Not when you ask me like that," she retorted.

"Answer me," he pleaded.

"Well, what if I am—sometimes? It isn't very often."

"Is it when you are in the Run-away Place?"

She kept her head averted.

"Please look at me," he said.

"There's *another* 'bus coming," she answered.

"You *are* only ten," said he, and dropped her wrist. "It's just play—that's all it means to you. Good-bye."

"Oh! Oh!——" She fluttered between him and the oncoming stage. Her eyes filled with tears, but he did not see, for he kept his face averted. She opened her mouth as if to say more, but just then he made as if to turn, and suddenly mindful of the tell-tale moisture, she fled to the corner, and sprang upon the step of the 'bus. It started on quickly. She looked back to wave her hand; that at least she could trust herself to do. But he was looking another way.

"But there is Sunday," she thought, biting her lip to fight back the tears. It might have

comforted her to know that he was thinking the same thought.

And on the morrow the Bluebird stood again behind the glass doors of the cabinet, and looked out over the room to the green, waving branches beyond the window. But in his soul the longing was stilled.

"Times are not what they were," he sighed. "Can it be that I am growing old?"

CHAPTER VII

OF POLLPARROTS, PORCELAINS AND THE HAND OF GOD

AS Philip finished the last paragraph, and laid down his book, there arose a shouting of small boys from the street below, and he went out on his balcony to investigate. At least seventy-five urchins were busily engaged in pelting something in an elm tree, and others were arriving every moment. Twice as many more men and women were watching the fun. Looking up into the tree, Philip saw, almost on a level with his sixth story windows, a parrot sitting on a limb, looking strangely out of place, with his gay green coat and red trimmings, in this dusty, ragged elm. He was paying no attention to the innumerable sparrows who hopped about on the surrounding twigs and surveyed the intruder with twitters of astonishment. He was paying less atten-

tion to the rain of stones around him, which, in point of fact, endangered those below far more than him. Philip heard somebody on the street inquire politely if he wanted a cracker, but he made no reply, only taking a firmer hold of the twig with his aged-looking claws, and shivering in the cold air, for the day was chill for May.

Poor bird, born to a warmer clime and the seclusion of the tropic jungle, his liberty had come too late! In the dusty elm over Washington Square he was a more pathetic captive than in his cage. He swayed on his twig more and more stolidly as daylight faded. The problem of how to get supper and how to get warm was too much for him. A policeman scattered the boys, who had finally succeeded in hitting a tramp on a park bench in the head. A few pedestrians lingered, looking up. Then they, too, passed on. The sunset pink died over the heights of Hoboken, and the lamps of the city flared out. But opposite his balcony, a black speck in the tracery of twigs, Philip could still see the poor

parrot clinging to his perch. Then the twilight passed into night, and he was visible no more.

But Philip continued to think of him, mourned somewhere in this big town no doubt by a little child, a pampered pet for whom liberty meant death and captivity salvation, a lost, green wing-feather in a drab world, a very paradox of a parrot. And he forgot to reflect on the book he had been reading, and read nothing else, for puzzling over the riddle.

The next day he sought Child Marie, for it was the promised Sunday.

"O, Portia, interpret," he said, when he had duly narrated the episode. Of their last parting he made no mention. And she said, "Was his green a very gay green, and did he look very tropicy?"

And when Philip nodded, she went on, "He meant Pan in Wall Street, a dreamer in a dry goods house. He meant there are some folks who are so constituted that, in a world constituted like this, they can't look after

themselves. You've lost a button off your coat."

"But why was he ever allowed out of Brazil? That's the brutal part of it all," said Philip, pulling at the thread where the button had been. "I've got the button some place."

"Parrot in the leafless tree . . ." she began. Then she hesitated. "That last line would have to go, 'I should know what God and man be,'" she continued. "That won't do, though it's quite as good as Tennyson's rhythm. But why would you strive to pluck the heart out of the mystery? It's so futile! You can't do it. Even Charlie had some doubts why his aunt was allowed out of Brazil, and wiser men than you have failed to solve the mystery of the parrot."

"So life is epitomized by a parrot!" said he. "The other day it was a bluebird."

"Precisely," said she. "But we shall be sentimentalizing like Sterne over the starling, if we are not careful. Let's go for a walk through the museum."

Child Philip demurred, pouting. "I hate museums," he said, "musty old places full of paintings that all 'tell a story,' and fool pottery. Let's not go for a walk through the museum."

"You forget," said Child Marie, gently, "that this museum is in the Run-away Place, so it must be nice, not like other museums. Besides, it's Sunday afternoon, and the people will be more fun than the pictures. They always are on Sundays."

Philip grew chirpy. "So it is in the Run-away Place," he said, "so it is Sunday, and there'll be lots of people. I'd forgotten about its being Sunday. Sunday does have its uses. Why aren't you in church?"

"I am," said Child Marie, with a wry smile.

He looked at her soberly. "I suspect I am very wicked," he said.

"I suspect you are," she answered.

"But—but——"

"Yes?" she queried.

"Why do you let me be?"

The girl looked at him oddly, almost as if she were afraid.

"I—I don't know!" she said; and she moved hastily down the path from Mount Mozart.

As Philip moved by her side, he was aware of a curious sense of being more alive than usual, perhaps because she was such an alive little being herself.

"I don't so much want to play as to feel, this afternoon," he said.

"Feel what?" she asked.

"I don't know; anything, everything. I'm kind of a spiritual octopus to-day, with feelers out in all directions for impressions. All the world is clamoring for me to pay attention to it!"

Marie turned her head away. "I know," she said. "Perhaps that's why I went to church this afternoon!"

Philip paused at the turnstile of the museum, while a blue baby waddled under the stile without grazing its bonnet, and scampered to feel the toes of a marble lady who

seemed somewhat unduly conscious of her lack of costume.

"I'm sure something wonderful is going to happen," he said, "my feelers are tingling."

Marie smiled, "This place is full of wonders," she said, "even if you don't like it."

"Oh, I like it well enough," he answered, "when I get by these awful native statues. I love the Egyptian people, who are always smiling. They sit in their cases and grin, not at you, but at something far off over your left shoulder. They all look terribly wise, like the Mona Lisa."

Presently he tore Child Marie from rapt contemplation of the little marble portrait of Queen Tii, which gazes down the main staircase on the Rodin at the base.

"I *must* think who it is she looks like," cried Marie. "It will haunt me till I remember."

"I should think it would," said Philip. "I prefer the Rodin."

They went down the stairs, past the crowds

swarming through the Fifth Avenue entrance, and stood before that nude bronze figure, at once the triumph of modern realism and imaginative suggestion, one of the most vital bronzes, surely, in the country. To Philip, at least, there was a haunting beauty in its touch of the earth, its unglorified nudity, and for him its indefinable sense of life was so potent that almost, in a twitch of sunlight on the back, he could fancy a muscle quivered.

The incoming crowds jostled him; he heard faintly the chattering comments of those who paused to look, also. But chiefly he saw a brown field at twilight, and water, and a rude hut, and a slain body, and a nude figure, poised with the grace of an animal, looking dumbly toward the sky.

Marie's voice brought him back.

"Is it so wonderful?" she asked.

"It is just what one of my feelers was crying for," he smiled.

"It took you far away," said she.

Philip drew close to her quickly. "It is a horrid statue, I hate it!" he said.

She looked at him hastily, and colored. "In the Run-away Place," she said, "we—we—ought to keep together."

They followed the crowd aimlessly for a time. The blue baby they met frequently. Usually it was insisting on being held up to inspect at close range the effigies of old knights and ladies lying peacefully on their tombs. But it cried also, to play with the toes of Moses and manifested great interest in the tombs of the Medicis.

"It has excellent taste," said Child Marie.

Presently they found themselves in front of Cabanel's canvas, "The Birth of Venus," which Philip said belonged to the candy box cover school of art.

Suddenly Marie gave a cry of triumph. "It's a maid we used to have!" she said.

"Well, well!" said Child Philip, looking more intently at Venus, "I'm sorry I wasn't then a visitor at your house!"

Child Marie blushed rosily. "I mean Queen Tii, of course!" she exclaimed, with a rather feeble attempt at stiffness.

"Oh, pardon me," said Philip, most meekly. "I misunderstood."

"For that," said she, "you shall be made to look at every picture that 'tells a story.'"

Philip glanced around the room. "Of course, they are the ones everybody is looking at," he said. "Let's listen to the comments of these seekers after light."

The galleries by now were crowded with a great throng of people, of all ages and races, the Sunday afternoon throng at the Metropolitan Museum, which averages 6,500 persons a Sunday. There were various ragged little boys, scarce railing high, who crowded before the battle scenes of Detaille and the other Frenchmen, and had no eyes for anything else. There were young lovers from the East Side, who wandered frankly arm in arm, even hand in hand, from masterpiece to masterpiece, and looked at each other.

"This is art for Cupid's sake," said Child Marie, watching two of them pass.

A retort was on Philip's lips, but he did not make it. He pondered it, however, for a

time in silence, and forgot to watch the crowds in watching Child Marie. She darted eagerly where the press was thickest about a picture, edged her way to the shoulder of some woman who was making comments to a companion, and presently would dart back again to Philip, her face beaming, and repeat what she had heard.

They stood some time in front of Schenck's big picture of sheep huddled in a blizzard, and Marie was all ears. She had already expressed one art criticism herself, with an air of finality. "Why do people paint sheep?" she had asked. Rather liking sheep himself, and particularly admiring the skill with which Schenck has rendered the cold, blown snow in the wool of their windward flanks, he had wisely said nothing. Two women came up beside them.

"You see that cross off in the distance?" said one, "well, I've a friend who says that detracts from the picture. I'm sure I don't see why. But, anyhow, *I* think an artist ought to have the right to put anything into

his picture he wants to. It's his picture, ain't it?"

"Certainly it is," said the other woman. "I gave them sheep to a friend of mine for a wedding present and they was much appreciated."

"Is that an argument against matrimony?" whispered Philip.

"No, against friends," answered Marie, as they moved on.

Close by hangs "The Last Token." That picture, also, is much admired by the Sunday afternoon throngs. An early Christian maiden stands in the arena, looking up with a pleased expression, to see who has thrown the rose that lies at her feet. Meanwhile tigers are creeping near to devour her, at least supposedly for that purpose. They do not seem very enthusiastic.

"Maybe they are Fletcherizing, and aren't really hungry yet," suggested Philip.

But his flippancy was rebuked by a little East-side Fluffy Ruffles, who just then came aggressively up to the rail, with a girl com-

panion. "Ain't that a sweet one, Mamie!" she cried enthusiastically, shifting her gum. "Her sweetheart's throwed her a rose, and the tigers are goin' to eat her. My, I think it's touchin'!"

"Now you see why the story pictures are here, don't you, Boy?" asked Child Marie, with a serious note in her voice.

"I won't, I won't, I won't!" he exclaimed, "I won't admit it. It's a compromise. I hate compromises."

"Then come and find the Rogers' groups," said Child Marie.

"Rogers' groups! Have they Rogers' groups here?" he exclaimed. "I adore Rogers' groups. America has produced three really great sculptors, Saint Gaudens, Barnard and Rogers."

"And you regard them, in the order named, with faith, hope and charity?" smiled Marie.

"Ingenious, but unconvincing," said he. "Rogers was a great man. Nobody could have one of his groups around the home with-

out learning what art isn't—which is the first step in learning what it is."

Before the Rogers' statuette of Ichabod Crane and the Headless Horseman they found two men and a woman standing, the men in immaculate frock coat, the woman with orchids at her bosom. The three spoke English, but with the trace of a foreign accent.

"How quaint!" said one of the men. "What does it represent?"

The woman bowed over the inscription, her gold pince-nez at her eyes. "I believe it is some American legend," she said. "It happened up the Hudson, near the town where Rockefeller lives, Tarrytown, is it? Maurice spoke of it one day when he came home from school."

"Fancy their having legends!" said the man.

"And this in New York!" whispered Marie. "They live here."

"They help elect our Mayor and Governor, no doubt," said Philip. "But I can't get excited over that, with these Rogers' groups

so wrongly mounted. It breaks my heart to see them treated so!"

"How?" asked Child Marie.

"Why just set on pedestals, like any ordinary statuary! They ought to stand on little marble-top tables, made out of black walnut, with the head of Minerva carved on the ends, and carved urns between the feet. A silk scarf ought to be flung with studied carelessness around the base of each statue, and the whole, if possible, stood in the bay window, where the neighbors can see it."

"Did you come from Brooklyn, Boy?" she asked.

"Oh, not that!" said he. "But I did come from Massachusetts."

They moved on with the throng, and presently found themselves in a group in contemplation of a picture by Hovenden called "Jerusalem the Golden." A sick lady sits in a chair, and a man sits sadly beside her, while off in the corner somebody is seen playing the piano. Nearly all the spectators were debating whether or not the lady had consump-

tion. Some said she had, some said her face showed too much color. But all were intensely interested.

"Courage, Camille!" said Philip, addressing the lady in the picture.

A sweet young thing who hung upon her escort's arm frowned at him angrily. "It's always nice to have your friends play sad tunes when you're dying, ain't it?" said she, to her escort, in a tone meant for Philip to hear.

But the escort was on Philip's side. "I'd rather have 'Harrigan' than a hymn tune," he said.

"And this is art!" said Philip, as they moved away from the still admiring group. "Poor George Fuller! See here, one of his misty, soft portraits, with the tone of an old master about it and that note of struggling, half inarticulate poetry he never failed to suggest—and not a soul bestowing on it so much as a passing glance!"

"But we see it," whispered Child Marie.

"I want *them* to see it!" he cried out, with

sudden earnestness. "The beauty is here, and they won't look, they don't know! It stirs me, it cries to me—and yet they hear nothing. I don't want to feel apart from them like this, as if I were better than they are. I want to share it with them."

"Boy," said she, "you want the impossible."

"Isn't that always most worth wanting?" he asked, looking earnestly at her.

Again the shrinking, half frightened look came into her eyes, and she turned away.

"Yes!" she breathed, almost fiercely.

In the next gallery she sank down on a bench to rest, and he beside her. They were facing the famous picture of Paul and Virginia running through the storm. A woman with two small boys came up, and began to expound the painting to her offspring.

"He doesn't mind the storm, so long as he has her," explained the mother. "You see how she is looking off at something, frightened. But he is just looking at her. The expression is wonderful. I remember the first

time I ever saw that picture; it was years ago. Your father and I saw it together. It is one of the greatest paintings in the museum."

She continued to regard the canvas, almost forgetful of her boys, who looked at it with brief interest, and then turned away to a near-by battle scene.

Philip turned to his companion. "One of the greatest paintings in the museum!" he whispered. "What are Manets and Sargents and Turners and Millets to her? 'Paul and Virginia' gave her her romance."

"The little story is all there, isn't it?" whispered back Marie.

He drew a little closer. "Fancy making love at the inspiration of that picture!" said he.

"It does seem incredible, doesn't it," she replied, looking at the picture.

"Does it?" said he, bending toward her, "I wonder!"

She looked at him, startled, and rose hastily. "Don't—you—there's another Rodin we haven't seen," she said.

There was a tense silence between them as they moved out of the gallery. Marie kept a little ahead, as if she were fleeing from him. He could not see whether she was angry or not.

They found the Rodin by the crowd about it. It stood, a lump of white marble, within a railing in the centre of one of the picture galleries. Over the railing hung a circle of curious faces, and Marie pressed in among them. He followed, and they stood side by side looking down at the lump of white rock called "The Hand of God," ringed by the peering, puzzled faces.

Out of the rough marble is thrust up a huge, strong hand, and this hand, in turn, is grasping a smaller mass of the rough stone in its palm. Out of that smaller mass two nude figures, a male and a female, are emerging. These figures are not clasped in embrace; rather are they coming to a twin birth. Their bodies are doubled, the one around the other, in the birth posture. Their eyes are closed. Yet they are of adult stature—

Adam and Eve, perhaps, the eternal male, the eternal female, twin born.

The marble plainly puzzled the crowd. "It ain't finished is it? Probably the sculptor began it and then died," shrilled a woman's voice.

"But God's got six fingers!" someone else exclaimed, viewing the composition from a rear angle that showed only Adam's foot.

"It's a hand holding a baby," a father was explaining to his children, as they passed with a casual glance.

But Marie and Philip moved slowly around the rail, paying scant attention to the comments over their shoulders. This lump of half carved marble, set in its circle of peering human faces, was speaking to them new and subtle things.

"He holds us in the hollow of His hand," whispered Marie.

"There is something strangely poignant," Philip answered, "in the way the man's head rests against the woman's bosom. His eyes are not yet opened, yet he knows where to

lay his head. *'Das Ewig-weibliche zieht uns hinan!'* It was ordained from the beginning. It is the law back of the universe, back in the cosmic lump God held in his hand!"

Marie's hands grasped the rail tightly. She made no answer. But presently she said, "How white and soft the marble is where Rodin has brought his flesh to a finish!"

"He is the greatest living master of texture," Philip answered.

He tried to speak calmly, but he could not. He was battling with an impulse to lay his hand down hard on the rail over hers, to embody all critical comment in a long, hungry look into her eyes. Her body suddenly thrilled him, her close presence at his side was beyond words sweet. Perhaps, by some intuition, she knew this, for she turned abruptly to depart, and they were suddenly conscious of the press of people about them, ringing the marble lump.

Instinctively they hastened through the galleries, tingling with their own sensations, avoiding the anticlimax of mere paint, or of

senseless comment from the crowd. Alive when he entered the museum, Philip was now in that condition of emotional sensitiveness when the soul waits on tip-toe for a miracle.

"What is going to happen?" he whispered excitedly into Marie's ear, though there was no need for whispers.

Her own eyes were large with a kind of wonder and joy and fear.

"I don't know, I don't know," she said, half breathlessly.

Their way led them into the great gold room where the Oriental porcelains are; and suddenly they knew that the adventure was upon them. Those thousand vases of perfect shape and exquisite color stood around them under transparent glass, and breathed a visible silence on their lips. Pure as flames, pure as thin flames burning in still air around an altar, they were. And yet they were not at all like that. That blue was the yearning blue of the dawn sky, when a quiet robin twitters in the grass; that pink the virgin pink of the eastern sea rim when the day is

dying. As the shell holds the music of the deep, these perfect shapes of color infinitely tender, infinitely alluring, sad with their own perfection, held the light of dawn and evening in their enamelled depths.

"Look!" she whispered, touching his hand, "the light does not come in from above. *It is shed like a radiance out the vases themselves!*"

And it was even so. A soft glow permeated the lofty room and passed upward, reflected from the gold walls, out through the ground glass skylights overhead. An overpowering sensation came upon Philip that they were standing on a hilltop in a land of flowers. Behind them the hills piled up, blue on bluer fold, and before them a valley of roses and trees in soft bloom and pool-beaded streams fell away to the far plain of the sea. Somewhere a robin sang, a single robin softly, and in all the world there were only she and he, old as the curve of the sea rim, young as the morning cloud.

"Boy," he heard her whisper, "we have

been here before, you and I, I don't know when. The cherry blossoms hung just so."

Had she really spoken? He turned to see. The light of wonder was in her eyes. And in her mind had been the same picture, and in her heart—in her heart had there been the same aching gladness? He must know!

"Was it sweet to be there, just you and I?" he whispered.

She looked at him a long, struggling moment. There was joy and there was terror and there were tears in her eyes. But before she answered there came a kind of smile, fighting up, and what she said was, "I think there was a parrot in a tree there."

His soul came down from its tip-toe abruptly. So she would not answer! She had not been moved enough for that.

"So Brazil was wrong," said he, himself with a wry, disappointed smile; "it should have been Japan. I didn't know they had parrots in Japan. But the mystery remains, why was he ever allowed out of Japan?"

"Yes," she said, in a low voice, almost

like a sob, turning away, "the mystery remains!"

"Marie, Child, what is it?" he asked with quick tenderness.

She smiled up at him. "It is nothing, truly," she said.

They went with the black swarm of people down the great steps to the Avenue, for the closing gong had sounded, and walked southward along the Park walk, the Run-away Place on one side, lying green into the low afternoon sun, on the other the mansions of the rich. They loitered on, almost in silence, till the Park was behind them, and the sun had set. She had never allowed him to accompany her out of the Run-away Place before. As the city swallowed them, a new sense of protection came over him, an added tingle of reality in her presence by his side.

And as he walked in silence in the fast gathering twilight, he wondered by what mysterious threads of destiny their lives had been drawn together. The carriages rolled endlessly by on the Avenue, the stream of

pedestrians brushed them on the walk, the great city, opening its myriad eyes to the dusk, lay all about, teeming, Titanic, alive. Yet out of this myriad spawn of the primeval monad they two had come together, and were now walking side by side, in intimate, sweet silence, they two apart from all the rest. Was it any less wonderful than the mood in the museum? Was it not more wonderful, for it was tingling with reality, it would last? Over the crowds and carriages, over the city, he seemed to see spun a great filmy net, like the ghost of a Cyclopean spider's web, and all the spokes converged in upon them. They were fast in the centre, and the threads went out to the ends of space. He rubbed his eyes, and she smiled up at him questioningly.

"It is nothing," said he, "it is everything."

"You must either get eyeglasses or more sleep," she replied, with a most practical air.

Presently she stopped and pointed westward down Thirtieth Street.

Against the last red banner of the defeated day, a church spire many blocks distant stood up alone and lovely. In our modern Babylon of sky-scrapers, it is almost impossible to glimpse any longer a spire against the sky. Commerce out-tops religion, and the tallest temple is made a pigmy by its next door neighbor, the thirty story office building. The most aspiring architectural form that man has devised is, in New York, unable to tell of its aspiration. But here, looking through the heart of the Tenderloin, down the vista of a thrice notorious street, the sudden, unexpected note was struck, the beautiful spire, clear-cut and slender, yearned up above the sordid roofs into the west.

"Your own Back Bay across the Charles could show nothing more lovely than that," she said; "nothing so lovely, in fact, for it would lack the charm of the unexpected, the heightening of contrast. You need a Singer tower, to appreciate the State House dome."

"If I were in college I should write a grandiloquent daily theme about it," said

Philip, "making it the symbol of the soul's aspiration."

"Why don't you anyway?" she asked.

"Because I have looked to-day in the Hand of God," he answered, "and seen there only a man and a woman."

He spoke with tense earnestness. Again the frightened look came into Marie's eyes, and a look of struggle, too.

"Boy," she said, "you are not a boy, you can't be a boy. Oh, you *won't* be a boy! You won't leave the bugle alone! You must leave me now, and you must promise once more not to follow."

"As you wish," he answered, "but not till I know when I am to see you again."

There was a battle fighting behind the girl's eyes.

"I don't know," she finally said. "My little vacation is over. It can't be week days, and it can't be Sundays any more. I—I can't lie again as I have to-day."

"It must be some time, and soon!" said he.

She shook her head. "I'm afraid not," she answered.

"But why, why?"

"Because you aren't a boy any longer!"

"Yes, all the more because I'm not a boy any longer, all the more, do you hear?"

"No, no, no!" she pleaded. "If you care, you won't!"

"Yes, I say," he cried, and tried in his eagerness to take her hands.

She drew herself up, repelling him.

"Don't!" she said. "Don't! I can't see you any more—not now, not for a long time, perhaps. I am going now; you have promised not to follow. Some Saturday afternoon I may be on Mount Mozart, I can't promise more than that. I shouldn't promise that! Oh, I *don't* promise that!"

The tears suddenly rushed into her eyes. She turned abruptly from him, and almost ran down the street.

He made no effort to follow, standing blankly, gazing at her retreating figure.

CHAPTER VIII

THE TOUCH OF SCHUMANN

THE June heat had come on, the horrid June heat, and Philip Stoughton worked at his novel with a syphon of soda on the desk and his clothes on a chair. Up in the New England hills his family still, no doubt, wore wraps of an evening when they went out on the pasture knoll to watch the sun set behind distant Graylock; and sometimes his vision carried him up there, and he felt the cool, sweet air on his brow. The rattle of traffic down under his window, the ceaseless roar of the great city, the din and dust and heat, smote on his nerves like stabs. He loathed the grim, ugly town. The country called to his heat-worn nerves with a thousand siren voices. But somewhere else in this heat and horror lived Child Marie, and he knew now that he could not leave her,

he knew with the certainty that all his hungry, lonely days since she left him that Sunday afternoon had given him. If he only knew half as well where she lived, how quickly would he smash all his promises to bits, he thought, and rush to find her.

Every Saturday noon had seen him in the summer-house on Mount Mozart, and every Saturday sunset lighted his dejected steps down the path and out of the Run-away Place, that now was almost hateful to him, with its load of memories: yet day after hot day he had wandered in it, in the chance hope of meeting her; day after hot day he had paced the residence streets of the town, watching for the sight of her in some window, in some door. He had haunted school houses. At times her image so obsessed him that he fancied he saw her in a crowd, and he would dash eagerly after, only to meet inevitable disappointment. He thought always how tired she must be, how worn. The memory of her farewell, of her frightened face, of her rush of tears, he could not lose. It haunted

him. Sometimes the blind pity of it would sweep over him and send him out searching at all hours. His hunger for her grew daily, fed on the loneliness, mounted to a passion that could not be denied.

This insufferably hot June night he threw down his pen at eight o'clock, and gave up all thought of work for the evening. There was a moon rising red over the steam of the city. He wanted her, he wanted her beyond all things else. He thought with a grim smile of the philosopher's statement that it is impossible to feel affection with the glass below zero or above eighty. He wanted her so badly that he felt his yearning must compel her, too, so that if he went out into the town their footsteps would draw together.

And, let the Society for Psychic Research make what of it they can, some unreasoned impulse led him across Washington Square, and there, on the corner of Macdougal Street, he met her, tired and worn and pale, coming up from the stewing, malodorous slums to the south.

She grew paler still when she saw him; then the color flooded into her face and her gasp of recognition was almost like a sob of joy, a sob she would have suppressed, but could not. He barred her passage, and as she perforce stopped right before him he looked down into her face and said, "I knew I should meet you."

"How did you know?" she asked, a little troubled. "Have you broken your promise, Boy?"

"No," said he. "But I wanted to meet you so badly that I just knew I should!"

"Ah, do you, too, believe that?" she exclaimed.

"I wonder——" he began.

"Yes?"

"I wonder if you helped?"

"You must let me go home now," she said, endeavoring to pass him.

He slipped quietly along by her side.

"No," he said, "I mustn't do anything of the sort. Let you go now? Not much! You see that beautiful, green gasolene 'bus?

Like the 'old three decker,' that's taking tired people to—the Run-away Place. The fare is ten cents, which isn't exorbitant, when you consider the destination."

"No, no," she remonstrated. "I must go home!"

"Yes, yes," said he. "You must do nothing of the kind!"

And he led her across the street, and up the little winding stairs to the roof of the 'bus. She went half in protest, half with a kind of exultant freedom. But she had to go. This night he was not to be resisted. When they alighted, Victory was leading General Sherman down the Avenue, like a golden ghost frozen on a pedestal, and the Park was soaked in moonlight.

"I have never been in the Park at night before," said Child Marie. "If I'm afraid may I take your hand?"

"I hope it's very, very spooky!" answered Child Philip.

And away they fled, down a path toward Lake Swan Boat, under the moon.

Have you, Gentle Reader, ever gone to the Run-away Place under the moon on a summer night? Probably you have not. Probably you are always the least bit scornful of the Park by day, and by night you suppose it a place where the underworld comes up to court, and naughty men of the upper world take ladies driving in taxicabs. Probably, too, your mamma thinks as you do, so, if you are a girl, you had better seek the adventure on the sly—shocking advice, is it not? And yet in your heart you do not think so, for you know you ought always to spare your mother needless pain.

And the adventure you must surely seek. Any one who knows the Park only by day, but half knows it, at best. No one who has failed to see it under the moon on a summer night, a misty summer night, can have any conception of the transformation, of the fairyland it then becomes in the very heart of town, the dream-spot, soaked in beauty, out of the pages of an old romance.

So these two tired run-aways found it, and

in silence and wonder they sped on, while the dream spell worked around them.

Well as they knew the Park by day, it was strange and mysterious to them now. Ever they passed figures on the paths, saw other figures dimly, on benches, heard laughs and whispers. And the figures were always in pairs, one of them usually dressed in white. There was nothing strange about it. It seemed the natural law of this enchanted garden. Presently they came out on an open glade. To the left the dark boles of great trees climbed up a knoll. To the right the moon-blanched green lay quiet under the night sky. Ahead of them in the misty distance, Cleopatra's needle rose up like a thin, pale spectre. Far off somewhere was a rumble of traffic, the never-ending hum of the great city. But it was subdued here, like the undertone of surf on a distant beach. Only the arc lamps on the drives made blue patches in the faint mist, which were out of harmony with the scene. Two lovers rose from a bench in front of them, and vanished up a

hidden path among the trees. Two other lovers came out of the shadow and took their places. Child Marie drew a deep breath, and paused.

"Did you ever see 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' on the stage?" she said. "Perhaps it's the arc lamps, perhaps it's because I really know this isn't fairy land, but just our Park, that makes it all seem like that dream play to me. Just so the lovers move in and out of the dim shadows at their cross purposes. I keep looking for Puck."

Philip laid his hand on her arm. "Not the stage," he said, "not the smell of the scene-loft, and the false green lights, not even if the play is Shakespeare! Oh, Child Marie, this *is* fairyland!"

"Yes, Boy, I know it is," she answered. "I know it is. Only I can't take it all in at first."

Slowly they moved to the west, along a heavily wooded path where on one side rose a bank and on the other was a deep gulley where a street crossed the Park, very properly

sunk down out of sight. And presently they passed up a little incline, in the deep shadow of flowery shrubs, and emerged suddenly on an open space of stone, gleaming white under the moon.

For a moment they did not realize where they were. Then they both uttered a little cry. Southward, where the moon rode over the tree tops, nothing was visible but the dark foliage, and to left and right the trees shut out the view. But northward all was open to the night sky, and right in front of them, cutting its white outlines against the purple, rose their tower of stone, the ancient tower like a castle out of old romance. They sprang upon the platform at its base, for the moment quite vacant, and tried the door to the tower. It was locked, but though they could not reach their magic casement, through the larger casement at the base they could find framed a picture of the still, dark water, the indistinct shore beyond, and the deep northern sky, where the Dipper gleamed faintly through the haze of heat that rose

from the city, reddened on the horizon from the invisible lights of Harlem.

It was a picture bathed in the witchery of moonlight on the water, and when they turned from it to look out on the gleaming white platform, guarded by its parapet of stone, the ghost of Hamlet's father, or some shining knight-at-arms, or a lily maid in robes of crimson paled by the moon, might have been walking there, and they would not have been surprised. As they watched, two figures did come out of the black shadow of bushes, by the path they themselves had come, and moved across the white stones to the parapet. The man's arm was about the girl, and, oblivious to the watchers in the shadow of the tower, as they leaned on the coping looking northward he stooped over and kissed her. The girl buried her face in his sleeve, and he drew her still closer.

"She is so happy, let us leave them alone," said Child Marie.

So they slipped away, still unobserved, though perhaps it would have made no differ-

ence to the pair who continued to lean upon the parapet.

And presently, as they walked down a broad path flecked with gold, where the moonlight sifted through the branches overhead, they caught sight of water between the trees, water pricked with reflected dots of light from the lamps on the other side. Hastening on, they crossed Pansy Bridge, and on a litttle beach where the water lapped up to their feet they found a vacant bench, and sat them down to gaze upon the most wonderful sight their eyes had ever beheld.

"Boy," said she, drawing a deep breath, "I must be literal! Tell me, *is* this New York? *Is* this our Park? Am I really awake?"

"One doesn't need faith, hope, charity, and a child's power of imagination to find this wonderful and lovely!" he answered. "Who, riding by over there in an Eighth Avenue car, would guess that we, a few hundred rods away, are in the heart of fairyland!"

They turned slowly around on their bench and drank in the whole scene. Behind them rose a deep, velvet lawn to a grove of great trees on a knoll, a silent, vacant lawn, as if some stately manor house lay sleeping behind those shadows, under the round moon. Eastward Pansy Bridge spanned the black water, from leafy bank to bank, its still reflection completing the perfect oval. Westward, far above and beyond the pond, the line of lights, the trees, rose a great dim procession of dark shapes, here and there checkered with golden squares of light, the vast apartment hotels along the Park front. But now, over the trees and under the sky, reddened by the invisible lights of the city, they were not hotels, they were ghost-ships steaming by, monster liners of the night, their starboard lights agleam, seen in a dream mirage, unreal, ethereal, yet mighty and magnificent.

But, looking northward, even they were forgot. The boy and girl on the bench saw only the Shining Water under the moon,

stretching out past the dark eyeot and the Forest Perilous, growing more and more misty as it receded, till finally it was lost in haze and shadow, as if it had no ending. A swan moved silently from the bushes on the bank, trailing a tiny golden wake across the dark water. Somebody on Pansy Bridge, some indistinguishable lover, perhaps, was whistling softly a commonplace little tune, that yet was transformed by the magic of the moon, even as the Park itself, into a thing wistful and lovely and strange. On the next bench a couple sat in silence, or, if they were speaking, it was in a whisper too low to be heard. And when Philip spoke, he, too, spoke in a whisper.

"I suppose you never read George Moore's 'Memoirs of My Dead Life'?" he said.

"I know enough about them to know it wouldn't do for me to confess it if I had," she smiled. "Why?"

"Well," said he, "in that book, in 'The Lovers of Orelay,' Doris sings Schumann's 'Nut Tree' to Moore, and it inspires him to

call Schubert's and Schumann's songs 'the moonlit lakes and nightingales of music.' I never realized before quite the full truth of that description. But now I do—now I should like to hear you sing 'Die Nussbaum,' and no other song in the world, unless it be one of Schubert's. There's just this throb and ache in their haunting, romantic music, just the moonlit unreality, the vague, almost too sensuous and too beautiful sadness and yearning of this scene."

"That's grown up language, Boy," she whispered.

"This is a grown up scene, Girl," he whispered back. "Did you ever hear the Kneisels play a Schumann quartet?"

"Yes," said she.

"Didn't it make you feel like this?"

"Yes," said she, more softly still.

He moved closer to her on the bench. One little hand lay on her lap, and he touched it. It lay quite still under his touch, and her eyes looked steadily out across the misty pond. Gradually his own hand closed over

it, and it nestled warmly into his palm. A thrill passed between them, and their shoulders leaned together.

"The moonlit lakes and nightingales of music," he whispered in her ear; "such things be in the world, dear little Girl. See the moon mist on the Shining Water, and hear the crickets in the grass. Beauty and dreams and passion, loveliness that aches with its own fullness, right in the midst of our hot, dirty, toiling town. Poor little girl who is so tired, so tired, let it rest on your eyes, and your ears, and your heart, till you forget!"

She leaned more heavily on his shoulder, but made no sound. Stooping forward, he looked in her face, and saw the mist shining in her eyes. And then an impulse surged over him, sweet, mighty, irresistible. He gathered her close in his arms, and kissed her. She buried her face on his sleeve, as the girl had done at the tower, and sobbed.

Presently she raised her face to his, and the tears were shining on her cheeks where the moonlight struck them.

"Kiss me again!" she whispered.

And then she rose and stood before him gravely.

"Boy," she said, "I must go home!"

He reached for her hands, but she put them behind her back.

"No, no," said she hastily. "I must go home! You must take me to a car!"

Still he remained seated. "Girl," he asked, "who are you?"

"You know—Marie," she answered.

"No, we are grown up now,—who are you?"

She shook her head. "You mustn't ask,—you musn't ask."

"Mustn't ask!" he cried. "Why, now I *must* ask!"

"Oh, no, no, no!" she answered. "Be Child Philip, and let me be Marie! Don't you see, don't you understand? It *can't* be anything else. That's who we are in the Run-away Place; and all the rest doesn't matter."

"Doesn't matter?" he said, rising and

taking her shoulders between his hands. "Doesn't matter? Of course it matters now, for I love you!"

The girl shivered at the words. "I—I—you—I mustn't see you again!" she said.

"You shall see me again," he answered. "You shall see me again, to-morrow! And you shall tell me now who you are!"

The girl looked up in his face, quivering between the hard grip of his hands. A tear still shone on her cheek, and her eyes, in the moonlight, were misty.

"Would you love me any more if you knew?" she asked. "Isn't it sweeter to have loved me without knowing? I've found it so!"

He drew her toward him, kissing her again, and her lips answered his.

"You are mine, mine, mine, whoever you are!" he whispered. "But we are going back into the world now, together, and we must know."

"Could you take me if you didn't know?" she breathed, her face close to his. "Could

you take me, this very night, and run far away, farther even than this shore of the Shining Water, farther than the last light of the town, far away from the heat and the worry and the work?"

"Do you mean it?" he cried, rising on her words like wings. "I'll take you northward, over the moonlit miles, across streams and valleys, up, up, into the cool, high hills, where the breeze sweeps and the stars shine and the whippoorwills shall sing our nuptial song! Come, my Belovéd!"

She wrenched herself from his embrace. "Stop, Boy, stop!" she exclaimed. "What am I letting you say? Oh, you don't know, you don't know. You are freedom, happiness, the joy-of-life, everything! You've stolen away my senses, you and the moonlight. I'm going now; you mustn't follow. Nobody will molest me. You mustn't follow, I say. Please, if you love me!"

"You shall not go till you tell me who you are, or where you live, or when I can see you," he cried, detaining her. "Do you

think I'm going to give you up this way? Do you?" He held her wrist almost roughly. "What do you take me for?"

"Day after to-morrow, then, the summer-house, at four," she answered. "Oh, please let me go!"

He searched her face hungrily, and her eyes fell, as if they dared not meet his. Then he dropped her wrist.

"Very well," he said, "as you wish."

But when he had released her, she did not stir for a moment. Then she came forward, kissed his shoulder, and sped swiftly away down the shore of the Shining Water. He watched her disappear into the shadows. After she was gone he sat down on the bench, pulled a pipe out of his pocket, filled and lit it, and stared moodily into the moon mist up the lake. Presently he became aware of the harsh roar and rattle of cars over on the avenue. The pond smelled stale. Two men passed along the little beach in front of him talking loudly with frequent oaths. The touch of Schumann had vanished. He got

up and walked hastily out of the Park, his soul filled with doubts and wonders. Once in the street, her kiss seemed as unreal as the fairyland behind him, spun out of dream-stuff. When he reached home his head ached dully, and his body was exhausted. He was like a man in whom the whole tide of being was at dead ebb.

CHAPTER IX

THE PESSIMISTIC PELICAN

AT quarter of four on the appointed day he passed by Victory without a glance and almost ran up the incline to the summer-house. The tide of life had flooded back again now, and was beating high against the shores. The minutes were hours till she came. He seized her hand, and looked hard into her eyes. They met his with a light he had never seen before, as if some shade had been raised, the ultimate reservation put aside. He knew without words that she was his. A song sang in his heart as he rested his hands on her shoulders, holding her away from him to smile into her face. There were hollows in her cheeks, and the sight of them hurt him.

"Tired little face!" he said. "Can we go soon up into the hills where the wind shall blow back the color?"

"Happy face now!" she answered, "for it has dared to 'follow the gleam.'"

They moved northward slowly into the heart of the Park. "*Do* you, *do* you, more than anything in the world?" she asked, squeezing his arm.

"More than anything in the world," he answered, "or anything beyond it!"

"Then I can tell you, and you'll understand. You always understand. I had to tell him last night. Oh, Boy, it was not easy. I fear I hurt him, you can understand that. But you cannot understand how I hurt myself, because you are only a boy after all, if you are a wonderful one. Now you know why I couldn't listen to your bugle at the gates. And now you know how wicked I was even to let the little girl out to play with you. Did you never guess? And didn't you despise me for it?"

"Despise you?" he replied, drawing close to her. "How little *you* understand! Despise you for going at your happiness? Perhaps I did guess, a little. I won't say that

I didn't. But I loved you. I loved you so much that I knew in my heart the walls would crumble. And I waited."

"I should have been awfully jealous if I'd guessed such a thing about you," said Marie, tucking her arm for an instant in his.

He shook his head. "No you wouldn't," he said. "Jealousy isn't the complement of love; it has nothing to do with love. It is a complement of personal vanity. The 'pangs of jealousy' are really the pains of wounded personal pride. Perhaps I was tempted to be jealous, to hate him. But I had to put such feelings away from me, for they are a sign of smallness, and I cannot be small where you are concerned, Marie. I cannot have anything petty in our love."

She pressed his arm, in silent reply.

"But won't you please be a little bit sorry for him, then?" she asked.

Philip shook his head.

"No," he answered, "I can't be sorry for him, either. Maybe I could if I knew him; maybe I should not have taken you if I had

known him, though I doubt it. I guess I've got what Ibsen calls a 'Viking conscience.' When I see my happiness I go straight for it. If I should stop to pity by the way, the bird might escape; and, after all, to catch the bird is success in life. Maybe that's a child's philosophy, or rather instinct. But I can't help it. God made me a free thing, and when my heart's singing a song of you, a triumph song, there's no room for any other note."

"The 'Viking conscience!'" said the girl, "Yes, that's it! That's what I have been striving toward all my life! God tried to make me a free thing, too, I guess, only he made me a woman, so that his work was but half done. That night, by the Shining Water, the old Viking struggled up. I dared to dream of flying with you. Would you have taken me?"

"Yes," said he.

"Without knowing who I am?"

"Without knowing who you are!"

"And thought no wrong?"

"And thought no wrong!"

"Ah, but I would not have dared to go, even now I would not dare to go. Yet there would be no wrong, would there, for we love each other?"

Their hands met at their sides, and for a moment they forgot the nursemaids on the benches.

"You see," she continued, "I'm a little cowardy-custard still, and I dread the hour of taking you home. All my life I've been hedged round with dear proprieties. I love some of them very much, when they are persons. But I could not let them stand between me and you, never that, Boy! I've yielded to them year in and year out, they've sunk into the nature of me, so that sometimes I've quite forgotten even to flutter against the bars. But when I went home that last night I—I—well, there was no fluttering about it. I stood at the bedroom window and looked out across the housetops that were all shining in the moon, and just knew that—I should have to have you, or die! Yes, Boy, it's as bad as that! I guess there's only

one thing will give a woman a 'Viking conscience'—love. You see, I knew at last that I loved you!"

"Didn't you know it till then?"

"Perhaps I did," she smiled, "but I hadn't admitted it, even to myself. I had just run to the Park to meet you like a thirsty deer to the pool. Besides, it was all so sudden—only a few weeks. Do you realize that?"

"And he, didn't you love him?" asked Philip.

She shook her head. "No," she answered. "I wonder if you can understand? Oh, you *must* understand! You must know that you are everything, now, always, forever! He was one of the proprieties. He was like church on Sunday or the family birthday parties. He was dear and good and conventional, and he hadn't been a boy for ever so many years. He had forgotten how to be a boy and play with me. Sometimes, when I came home from work—it's hard work down in the Settlement, that uses my grown-up self all up—something in me wanted to be

played with, but there was no little playmate, nobody to meet the need. Always everybody would be talking serious matters, and on Sunday nights they sang hymns in the parlor, till I've seen the time when I could have screamed, and would have, too, if there'd been anybody to know why I did it! Boy, some Sunday I want to stay quite away from church, and play golf all day, and go hear a vaudeville concert in the evening!"

"I'll never ask you to go to church but the once!" he laughed. "But," he added, seriously, "if you didn't love him——"

"Ah!" said she, "I thought I did. I thought I knew what love was. Even I almost thought that I was happy. Sometimes I think that women don't know so much as they are credited with, even intuitively. And even when they do, they cheat themseves. They know they want to love, and be loved, and that need, that desire, drives them into terrible compromises. Maybe they don't know any better, maybe only deep down in their hearts is there any hint that what they

are cherishing is but the poor pale shadow. Heaven help them if it's too late when the reality walks into their lives and suddenly the veil falls from their eyes, and the passion sweeps over them! Boy, I'll tell you everything—or almost everything! I began to doubt that day in the tower, when I found I was jealous of your lady on the other side of the hill—I began to doubt because I was jealous, and because you thrilled me, and because I *let* you thrill me, and because I promised to come again, even after that. You see, I *did* have a little of the 'Viking conscience!'"

"Dear girl," he said, "you too know that just to catch the bird is success."

"Yes, I know it—now!" She pressed his arm. "And then, under the spell of the moon, your Schumann moon, I just forgot everything, because I saw the bird fluttering so near my hand, and I reached for it. Oh, it was good to be free, to be wild, to go straight for your happiness! I knew when you kissed me, and I returned your kiss, that

I had never even dreamed what love is. I didn't know before it was *that,* that there could be anything like *that!* It swept over me like a wave, and even if I did run away from you, Boy, I ran on air. My running away was the last gasp in me, I think, of the theory I was reared in—that anything so pleasant must be wicked!"

She finished with a little laugh.

They had come to a pause in front of the large bird cage in the Zoo, their steps having strayed unheeded.

"You *do,* don't you?" she suddenly asked again, leaning hard against his side.

His fingers sought hers. "More than anything in the world," he answered.

The pink pelican was waddling just on the other side of the net. He looked up at the words and regarded the pair solemnly.

"Pink Pelican," said Philip, "this is Marie, my Betrothed. We ran away and fell in love, which we hadn't oughter, not being properly introduced, and, besides, she thought she loved another man."

The solemn bird made no sound, no motion, but continued to regard them fixedly.

"We are very happy, Mr. Pelican," said she. "You might look as though you sympathized." She leaned her head lightly against Philip's shoulder as she spoke.

The pelican deliberately turned away from them, drew one foot up under him, bent his long pink neck back between his wings, hid his head under the feathers, wabbled once or twice to get a perfect balance, and went to sleep.

"He's a pessimist," said Philip.

"Poor, foolish bird!" said Child Marie, with a happy little laugh.

When they came out upon Victory leading General Sherman down the Avenue, it suddenly occurred to both that something had still been omitted.

"Mayn't I know whom I'm going to marry?" he asked.

"And I what my name is going to be?" she answered.

So, solemnly, with great formality, they

exchanged cards, and laughed, for they were neighbors, and climbed aboard a southward going 'bus.

"Good bye, dear Run-away Place," she whispered, looking back. "We caught the bird of happiness in you!"

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